



JAMES VI. OF SCOTLAND, WHO BECAME IN THE YEAR 1603 JAMES I.
OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

GATEWAYS TO HISTORY

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Book IIIA. Men of Britain

"Let us now praise famous men"

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P R E F A C E

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The object of the writer of this volume is to tell the story of the British Isles in such a way that it can be connected with the geograpy of the country. He therefore devotes more attention to the events which led up to the gradual drawing together of the four nations into one. The latter portion of the history receives less detailed consideration, but is more fully dealt with in the next two volumes of the series.

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GATEWAYS TO HISTORY

BOOK IIIA.

CHAPTER I.—THE EARLY DAYS.

THE British Isles consist of the two large islands of Great Britain and Ireland and a great number of smaller islands and islets. Great Britain is divided into England, Scotland, and Wales.

Thus, we have four separate countries within the British Isles. They are now all under one King, but this was not always the case. Each of the four nations has a history of its own, though the story of each is interwoven with that of the others.

We are going in this book to learn something of the story of England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland; but we shall take special pains to find out (1) how it was that there came to be four nations in a group of islands which seem to have

been meant to form one country ; and (2) how it was that these four nations were at last joined together under one King.

There was a time, long, long ago, when none of these different peoples lived in our islands. They came to them from Europe, across the North Sea and English Channel. The first to come were the forefathers of those people who now live in the parts of our islands farthest away from Europe—in Western Ireland and the Western Highlands of Scotland.

Then after a long time came another race, afterwards known as the Britons. Their ways and looks were very like those of the earlier comers. But this did not prevent them from fighting the old settlers. And after a long struggle they drove them westward into those parts where their descendants are still to be found.

When we first learn anything about these Britons, from some of the world's earliest books, we find that they were not quite savages, though they lived in a very rude kind of way.

If we could see the country to-day as it was then, we should scarcely know it as our own. It was covered with thick forests and great marshes, which made the climate wetter and colder than it is now. Many wild beasts roamed in the forests

—wolves, boars, and cattle—and there were great flocks of wild birds.

The people were divided into tribes that often went to war with each other. Those in the south-east of England were most civilized. They knew how to till the ground and grow barley; they had flocks of sheep and herds of cattle; they could weave cloth, and they knew how to dye it in various colours like the plaids of the Highlanders; they made baskets and pots, and even had ornaments of gold.

They had boats made either of great tree-trunks hollowed out or of wickerwork frames covered with skins. The latter were called coracles, and boats very like them may still be seen in parts of Wales. The Britons of the North of England and the Midlands were not so civilized. They lived chiefly by hunting, and they dressed in the skins of animals.

The Britons did not live in towns. In times of peace they dwelt in villages or scattered huts. When an enemy came against them, they took refuge in a clearing in a forest behind banks of earth, on the top of which they set up wooden palings. When they went to battle, they painted their faces and limbs blue or green in order to frighten the enemy.

The chiefs drove along the enemy's ranks in

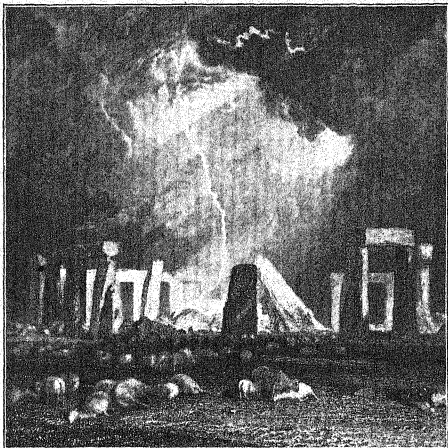
chariots, which had long blades, like those of scythes, fastened to the axles. When they had made a gap in the line, they leapt down and fought on foot among their foes.

The Britons worshipped many gods. Their teachers and priests were called Druids. They looked upon the mistletoe as a sacred plant, and at certain seasons, we are told, the Druids went in white robes to cut it down from the oak-trees with sickles of gold.

At Stonehenge in Wiltshire, and some other places, there are still to be seen great circles of large stones standing upright. Some people think these are the remains of Druid temples; others say they are monuments set up to the memory of dead chieftains.

About three hundred years before Christ was born there came to Britain some travellers from the South of France. They came to inquire about the tin-mines which, even then, were worked in Cornwall and Devon. These people started a trade in tin between Britain and their own city. And in the early books our islands were known as the Tin Islands.

We know very little about the tribes whom the Britons are said to have driven into the mountains of Scotland and across the sea to Ireland. Those to the north of the Firth of Forth we shall meet



STONEHENGE.

(J. M. W. Turner.)

with at a later time under the name of the Picts and Scots. They were very fierce, wild people, most of them being tall and red-haired.

The Scots, says an old legend, had crossed over from Ireland, where there reigned a King who was descended from Pharaoh's daughter, whose name was Scota. But this, of course, is a mere tale.

CHAPTER II.—THE ROMANS IN BRITAIN.

THE next visitors to Britain were the warlike Romans, at that time the most powerful people in the world. They came from Rome, the chief city of Italy. Their soldiers were brave, well drilled, and well armed. And they had great cities full of fine buildings, in which lived many rich and learned men.

The general who led the first Roman army to Britain was Julius Cæsar, one of the greatest men who have ever lived. He had just conquered the country now called France, but at that time known as Gaul. Then he thought he would cross the narrow sea and carry the Roman arms into Britain.

He therefore crossed the Channel, but only to find the high white cliffs crowded with Britons, who were quite ready to fight. He managed to make a landing in Kent, but he soon went away to Gaul without having done anything.

In the following year he came again with a larger army, and marched inland as far as the place where the city of St. Albans now stands. Here there was a British stronghold, which the Romans took after a stern fight. Then Cæsar went back once more to Gaul, and for about a hundred years the Romans left the Britons alone.

Then a certain Roman Emperor made up his mind to conquer the island completely. Many armies and many generals were sent one after another, and there was much fierce fighting. And in the end Britain became part of the Roman Empire.

Yet the Romans never really conquered the whole of our islands. One of their generals marched as far north as the Tay, while at the same time the Roman ships crept slowly along the east coast, making raids upon the villages as they went.

At Mons Graupius he met the Picts and Scots—the Romans called them Caledonians—who were gathered together in a great army to make a final stand.

A Roman writer tells us that before the battle the Caledonian chief, who was named Galgacus, spoke thus to his army :

“We, the noblest sons of Britain, hidden in its last recesses, have never even looked upon slavery. These plunderers of the world envy us in our poverty. Where they make a desert they call it peace.

“But shall not we show at the first onset what men Caledonia has still left for her defence? Be not terrified by an idle show, and the glitter of silver and gold, which can neither protect nor

wound. March on to battle, and think of your ancestors and your children."

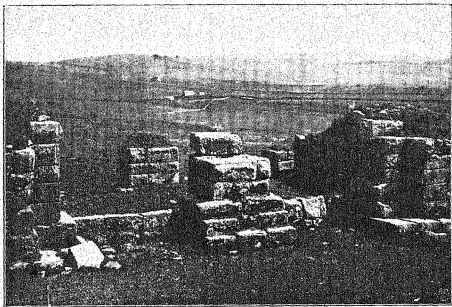
Then followed a fierce fight. At first the Caledonians stood their ground bravely. But they were no match for the well-trained Roman soldiers, who after a while drove them from the field.

But these northern tribes went on giving great trouble to the Roman masters of the South of Britain; and to keep them out of the lands which they had really won the Romans built two great walls right across the country.

One of these ran from near the mouth of the river Tyne to the head of the Solway Firth, a distance of nearly seventy miles. It was made of stone, and was twenty feet high and more than eight feet thick. About every quarter of a mile there was a watch-tower.

On the northern side of the wall from which the enemy would approach there was a deep ditch. South of the wall there were three rows of earthen banks, and in front of these was another ditch. Parts of this wall may still be seen. The other wall ran between the Firths of Forth and Clyde, but it was not so strong as that in Northern England.

The Romans had great trouble to subdue the tribes who lived in the mountains of what is now



GATEWAY OF A ROMAN CAMP.

(Photo by G. W. Wilson & Co.)

called Wales. In the south of that land a brave chief named Caractacus held out for a long time. He gave the Romans much trouble before he was caught and sent to Rome.

He was led in triumph through the streets of the great city. And as he went he wondered that men who had such wealth should envy him his poor cottage in Britain. It is said that the Emperor, struck by his noble bearing, gave him his freedom instead of putting him to death.

In North Wales the Britons made their last stand in the island now known as Anglesey, where most of the Druids had gathered together.

The Romans made up their minds to kill all the Druids, for they knew that it was these men who urged the Britons to fight so bravely against them. So they marched an army through North Wales to the narrow channel now known as the Menai Straits.

The army waited at Carnarvon until rough boats could be put together to carry the foot-soldiers across. On the other side of the channel stood armed men ready to meet the Romans. The Druids stood near them, dressed in their long flowing robes and hoods of white, and with uplifted arms they prayed to their gods for victory over their foes.

Many of the Romans, brave as they were, shook with fear when they saw the foe whom they had to fight, but only for a few moments. On they came, and in the fearful fight which followed none of the Druids or their people were spared.

The Romans ruled in Britain for about three hundred and fifty years. In many ways their rule was good for the Britons. They forced all the tribes to live at peace with each other, and made just laws so that every man could quietly keep what belonged to him.

The Romans were famous road-makers. They made very straight, good paved roads from one

end of the land to the other. Some of them have been used as foundations for our highways.

Most of the roads met in London, which was then the chief trading town. The Romans built a bridge over the river Thames, almost at the same place where London Bridge stands now. On the other side of this bridge the roads began again, and ran to certain places on the south coast.

They also built a number of towns in Britain. In the north their chief town was what is now called York. Bath rose up round the splendid Roman baths, of which the ruins can still be seen. Some of their towns were fortified camps for their soldiers to live in, such as Chester, Doncaster, Gloucester, and Colchester. You will notice that the endings of all these names are somewhat alike, for they all come from the Roman or Latin word *castra*, which means a camp.

When they first came to Britain the Romans were heathen, but during the time they ruled here they became Christians. Then Christian teachers came to preach to the Britons, and churches were built for them.

But the Romans, on the whole, did the Britons more harm than good. They laid heavy taxes upon them, and forced them to serve in their armies. Worst of all, they robbed them of their freedom and their courage, so that they came to

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look to the Romans to defend them from their enemies.

But as time went on the Romans were less able to do this. They had become lazy and easy-going, and were not nearly such good soldiers as they had been. Yet at this time they needed to be braver than ever, for the lands which they held in Europe were being overrun by some fierce tribes who lived in what is now called Germany.

Some of these tribesmen came across the North Sea, and in time overran nearly the whole of our island. But we shall read more of this in another chapter.

At last the ruler of Rome was forced to call upon nearly all his soldiers to come and defend the great city itself. So the Roman soldiers left Britain for ever, and the Britons had now to take care of themselves.

CHAPTER III.—THE COMING OF THE ENGLISH.

THE departure of the Romans laid the Britons open to attacks from the Caledonians of the north of the island. They broke through the great walls, and other tribes akin to them came across the Irish Sea and landed on the western coasts.

A third set of foes came from across the North Sea. These were the Teutons, who lived about the southern shore of the Baltic. Three tribes of this race seem to have marked out Britain for their prey—the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes. And before the Romans went away they had begun to make raids upon the eastern shores of Britain.

They were known as vikings—that is, “men of the creek”—because they used to sail up the creeks or openings in the coasts, plunder the villages, and slay the people. Another good name for them would be pirates or sea-robbers.

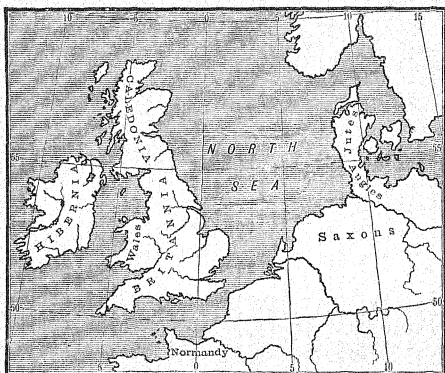
There was a British King or chief named Vortigern who ruled in the south-eastern part of Britain. Being attacked by the wild tribes from the North, he made up his mind to hire some of the vikings to help him.

Nearly fifteen centuries ago a party of Jutes landed in the Isle of Thanet, and Vortigern asked for their help against his foes. They fought readily for him; but when they saw what a good land they had come to, they made up their minds to take it for themselves.

Fresh parties of their kinsmen followed them into Thanet, where Vortigern had granted land to his allies. They soon crossed over into Kent, and began to fight with the Britons. It was no hard task to overcome them, and before long

there was a Jutish kingdom of Kent in the south-eastern corner of Britain.

After the Jutes came the Saxons, to whom the rich lands along the south coast and near the Thames fell an easy prey. And in due time there



THE BRITISH ISLES AND THE FIRST HOME OF THE ENGLISH.

arose the kingdoms of Sussex, or of the South Saxons; Wessex, of the West Saxons; and Essex, of the East Saxons.

Meanwhile parties of Angles had settled on the east coast, and were engaged in setting up the kingdom of East Anglia. At first this was

divided between the North Folk and the South Folk, who held the land now known as Norfolk and Suffolk.

Other vikings, mostly Angles, made settlements along the middle part of the eastern coasts of Britain. These were afterwards joined into one large kingdom called Northumbria, which means "the land north of the Humber." It was much larger than the present county of Northumberland, for it reached as far north as the Firth of Forth.

Gradually the central part of what is now England was peopled by the Angles also. This part came to be called Mercia, which means the "borderland," because it lay next the lands still held by the Britons.

All this took about one hundred and thirty years to happen. At the end of that time the invaders were masters of all the plains in the east of the island of Britain. But the Britons still held the mountain lands on the west, from Cornwall right up to the Firth of Clyde.

In time, however, the West Saxons pushed their way to the Bristol Channel. A great battle took place near Gloucester, in which they routed the British, and separated those of Cornwall from those of the land now known as Wales.

Some years later there was another fierce battle near Chester, in which the Britons were again beaten, this time by the King of Northumbria. They had with them a host of monks, who came not to fight, but, like the Druids of old, to pray for victory while the battle was raging.

“If they do not fight against us with their arms,” said the heathen King, “they do so with their prayers.” And in the slaughter that followed not one of the monks was spared.

A glance at the map will show that these two victories had broken the British line of defence in two places, and prevented them from joining together against the foe.

As we have seen, the greater part of the conquered land was in the hands of the Angles. So it came to pass that when the new country came to be spoken of by one name, it was called Angle-land, or England, and its people the English.

The new-comers gave to the Britons the name of Welsh, which means “strangers.” But in time this name came to be used only for those who lived in the mountain lands between the Severn and the Dee.

We now have our islands divided in the following way: In the far north of Britain lived the Highland Scots; south of the Firths of Forth

and Clyde the country was shared between Britons and English. But the only Britons who kept, on the whole, quite separate from the English were those who lived in what we now call Wales. Ireland was held by the tribes whom we shall henceforth speak of as the Irish.

This is almost the same division as we have at the present day. But the land between the Firths of Forth and Clyde and the Cheviot Hills is now part of the kingdom of Scotland. Yet we must not forget that the greater part of the people of Southern Scotland had English forefathers, and that they are quite distinct from the people of the Northern Highlands.

The English were very different from the Irish, Welsh, and Highland Scots, and some of the differences between them may be noticed at the present day.

The Irish, Welsh, and Highland Scots are generally quicker-witted than the English, and more excitable. They are merrier when they are gay, and sadder when they are in trouble; hotter-tempered, and more ready to show their love or hatred. The English are slower and steadier—not quick, but sure and patient.

For a long time the customs of the two races were very much unlike. The Welsh, Irish, and Scots were for hundreds of years divided into

tribes or clans. All the people in a tribe were supposed to be of the same family. Each man had his share in the land belonging to the tribe.

The chief of the tribe or clan was very powerful. His word was law; he could put to death anyone who did not obey him. But as a rule the clansmen or tribesmen were devoted to him and would gladly die for him.

The English lived in quite a different way. When they had won the rich plains of Eastern Britain, most of them settled down to a farming life. They had always been in their old homes a farming people, and they had only taken to being sea-robbers because there was not room enough for all of them in their old country.

A few families all related to each other settled down in a village together. Each man had his own cottage and a strip of ploughed land near it on which he could grow his corn. Outside the village were pasture-lands and forest, which belonged to all the villagers together. On these lands they fed their cattle and pigs.

Every farmer who had his home and his bit of land was quite free; there was no tribal chief to whom he owed strict obedience. But certain men called Ealdormen or Eldermen were chosen to lead the people when war was to be undertaken.

After they settled in Britain, however, they

began to have Kings. But these were chosen by a council called the "Assembly of the Wise Men," who were mostly Ealdormen; and without the consent of the Wise Men the Kings could do nothing of importance.

When an Irish or Scottish chief died, his son became head of the tribe or clan. But when an English King died, his successor was *chosen* by the Wise Men according to his fitness for the work of ruling and leading his people in war. It is true that they often chose the eldest son of the last King, but they were not bound to do so by any means.

CHAPTER IV.—SAINT PATRICK.

WE know little that is certain about Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, but his story appears to be as follows:

He was born shortly before the Romans left Britain, and it is thought that his native place was a village on the banks of the Clyde. One day there came sailing up the river a pirate boat from across the Irish Sea. The fierce robbers landed, burnt the home of the boy Patrick, and carried him off as a prisoner to Ireland. There he served for about eight years as the slave of an Irish chief.

Then he was able to escape, and having become a priest, he went to France, then called Gaul, and some say also to Italy. But wherever he went he could not dismiss from his mind the thought of the island in which he had served as a slave.

He seemed to feel that he was meant to go there and preach the Gospel to the people. At last he made up his mind to go. So with a few followers he set sail, and landed at Strangford Lough.

From here he went to Meath, where the King was holding a heathen feast in his palace of Iona. It was the time of Easter, and, choosing a hill which could be plainly seen from the King's palace, Patrick and his friends set up a camp and lighted a fire.

Now, by the law of the land no lights were to be shown until the King's beacon had been kindled; so the monarch in his anger sent men to seize the daring priest.

Then, say {the old tales, Saint Patrick drew near to the halls of Tara; and as he walked the earth shook beneath him, and a thick darkness fell upon the land. Boldly he told the King his message and his mission, and when the magicians tried their skill upon him they were seized by unseen hands and tossed into the air.

The words of Saint Patrick, helped by the



SAINTE PATRICK.

(From the painting by Tintoretto. Anderson, Photo.)

wonderful signs in heaven and earth, caused many to forsake their heathen ways. And many believed on the Christ of whom the new-comer spoke so well and with such tender passion.

Then Patrick set out for the province of Connaught, where he gained many converts and set up churches and monasteries. It is said that one day he climbed to the top of the mountain which overlooks Clew Bay, so it was named Croagh Patrick after him.

Next he went to Ulster, preaching and teaching as he went; and at Armagh he laid the foundation of the great church which was afterwards built in that city. Whole clans were baptized at a time. Wherever he went Saint Patrick seemed to win all hearts.

Many stories are told of the saint and the wonders that he worked, but these do not belong to history. Of one thing at least we are quite sure: Ireland became a Christian country; and while in Britain was being fought the long and fierce battle between the English and the Britons, the "Isle of the West" was known as the home of religion and learning.

Irish monks in their cells studied the Scriptures, and with loving hands wrote down the sacred words, decorating the pages with all the skill of the artist.

Irish missionaries were filled with a great desire to tell the glad news of the Gospel in other lands. Some went to Scotland and taught the fierce Picts of the northern lands. Others went to Germany, others, again, to Italy. And wherever they went their preaching and zeal won converts to their faith.

From all the lands of Europe scholars came to sit at the feet of Irish teachers. They were kept free of cost in the monastery schools, and took the learning which they won there to all parts of the Continent.

So Saint Patrick won a peaceful victory over the wild tribes of the Emerald Isle. And to-day he is remembered as the patron Saint of Ireland, the man who turned her people from darkness to light. It was a good day for Ireland when those pirates sailed up the Clyde and carried away the boy Patrick from his home.

CHAPTER V.—THE EARLY MISSIONARIES.

THE English tribes from the other side of the North Sea were heathen. Their gods were fierce warriors, to whom mercy and pity were unknown. Some of the days of the week are still called after

the early English gods. Wednesday is the day of Woden, who was the father of the gods and king of men. Thursday is the day of Thor, who was the god of thunder and of war.

The Venerable Bede, one of the first of our English writers, tells this pretty story :

One day a good priest named Gregory was walking in the slave-market at Rome, when he saw among the captives some beautiful boys with fair skins and rosy faces. They had hair of very great beauty, silken, glossy, waving with curls of gold.

Gregory asked one who walked with him who these children were and whence they came. He was told that they were Angles from the island of Britain. "Not Angles, but angels," murmured the priest, as he gazed with pleasure on the fair beauty of the little strangers.

Then he asked what was the name of their King, and he was told that it was *Ælla*. "That is Alleluia," he quickly said with a quiet smile ; "for the praises of God shall one day be sung in those parts."

Some years later Gregory became Pope, and, remembering the heathen Angles, he sent a missionary named Augustine to preach to them about Christ and God.

The preacher was kindly received by the King

of Kent, whose wife was a Christian. Leave was given him to preach to the people, many were converted, churches were built, and in due time Augustine became the first Archbishop of Canterbury.

Not long afterwards the kingdom of Northumbria also became Christian. There came to the Court of the King, Edwin by name, a priest named Paulinus, who had been trained in Kent. And a council of the Wise Men was called together to hear what he had to say.

The good priest told the Northumbrians the "old, old story," and when he had finished speaking an aged warrior rose, and said :

"Truly the present life of a man is on this wise. It is as when thou, O King, art sitting at supper with thy friends in the time of winter, when the hearth is lighted in the midst and the hall is warm, but without the rains and the snow are falling and the winds are howling loud.

"Then cometh a sparrow and flieth through the hall ; she cometh in by one door, and goeth out at another. While she is in the hall she feeleth not the storm of winter ; but yet after a little time of rest she flieth again into the storm and passeth away from our eyes.

"So is it with the life of man. It is but for a moment ; what cometh before and what cometh

after it we know not at all. Wherefore, if this stranger can tell us anything of these matters let us obey his law."

Then Paulinus once more spoke to them ; and when he had finished the King said that he had made up his mind to become a follower of Christ. And Coifi, the high priest of the old gods, mounted a horse, and with a spear in his hand rode furiously to the heathen temple. There he hurled the spear into the temple as a sign that he thought the old gods were nothing, and that he, too, was now a Christian.

After Edwin's death, however, many of his people fell back into heathen ways ; and more missionaries were needed to teach them. This time they came from Scotland.

A good monk from Ireland named Columba had founded a monastery in the little island of Iona, off the west coast of Scotland. And he spent a great deal of his time in travelling about teaching and preaching to the people of those parts.

He was so gentle and kind, this monk of Ireland, that everyone who knew him loved him dearly. He seemed to be one who always "beckoned to the unfortunate to come and take shelter under him," like the Master in whose service he lived.

To his monastery at Iona there had once come



BEWCASTLE MONUMENT.

(The tombstone of an early Northumbrian Prince. Bewcastle is on the Cumberland border.)

for refuge from his foes a young Prince of Northumbria named Oswald. In after years, when he came to the throne, he sent for some of the monks of Iona to come and preach to his people.

A band of them came under a good priest named Aidan, who set up a monastery in Lindisfarne, off the Northumbrian coast. From this place he sent out preachers to all parts of the North of England; and he himself preached and taught without ceasing until the whole of Northumbria became Christian.

Bede tells us many stories of the goodness of the monk of Lindisfarne. "He went always on foot through the land," he writes, "never on horseback; and whenever in his way he met any, rich or poor, he spoke to them of the faith and stirred them up by words and actions to alms and good works.

"His course of life was much different from that of slothful men. Wherever he went he was engaged in reading or thinking. And if it happened that he was invited to eat with the King, he went with one or two monks, and, having taken a small repast, made haste to be gone with them either to read or write.

"Whatever gifts of money he received from the rich he always gave away for the use of the poor. One day a rich man gave him a horse to ride on

that he might travel more easily. But Aidan gave the horse away to the first beggar that he met."

One of the best of those who carried on Aidan's work was a monk named Cuthbert, who also spent his life in good work in the North. He was a shepherd-boy in Southern Scotland, and one night he thought he saw a group of angels carrying the soul of Aidan to heaven.

He made his way to Melrose, and after a time became a priest, living in a cell on Lindisfarne. For many a weary mile he tramped across the Northumbrian moors and fells, teaching and preaching like Aidan before him. When he died, his followers brought his body to Durham, and there the great church on the Wear was founded.

CHAPTER VI.—THE NORSEMEN.

WE have seen how the English set up in Great Britain a number of separate kingdoms. When they had beaten back the Britons into the mountain lands of the West, they began to struggle among themselves for the mastery.

After a great deal of cruel fighting, the Kings of Wessex became the most powerful, and one of them, named Egbert, brought the other English

Kings more or less under his rule. He also overran Devon and Cornwall, and added them to Wessex.

There was a very good reason why the English should join together at this time. Britain, Ireland, and all the West of Europe were being attacked by fierce foes. These were the vikings from Denmark and Norway, who were closely related to the English, and like them in many ways.

The English usually spoke of them as Danes, but others called them Northmen or Norsemen. As the English themselves had done in days gone by, they sailed up the mouths of the rivers, got all the booty they could, and slew the people. Then they sailed off before the English, who had forgotten their old seafaring ways, could catch them.

The people on the coast and by the river-mouths sorely dreaded the sight of the black raven on a Danish sail. The Danes were heathen, and worshipped Thor and Woden, as the English had once done. So they thought nothing of plundering the churches and monasteries and carrying away the cups and crosses of silver and gold.

Egbert of Wessex bravely fought against the Danes, and so did his sons and grandsons. But though they were often beaten in battle, the



KING ALFRED THE GREAT.

(From the statue at Winchester. F. G. O. Stuart, Photo)

Danes came swarming over ; and in time they were able to make camps in which they stayed during the winter.

The great hero of the English in their struggle with these vikings was King Alfred of Wessex. He was one of the greatest and best monarchs who have ever reigned in our country.

When he came to the throne the Danes had overrun the east, north, and middle of England ; and now, under a leader named Guthrum, they were making attacks upon Wessex. At first they were successful, and Alfred was forced to hide himself in the Isle of Athelney in Somersetshire, which was then to a great extent fen country.

But he did not stay long in hiding. His warriors began to gather round him, and as soon as he felt himself strong enough he marched out to attack the Danes. On the chalk downs in Wiltshire he fought a great battle and won a complete victory.

The Danes were forced to make peace. It was agreed that Alfred should keep all England south-west of a line which ran from the Thames a little below London to Chester on the river Dee.

All the land north-east of this line was to belong to the Danes. Indeed, they had already firmly settled themselves there. You may know where the Danes once lived if you find the names

of places ending in "by," such as Whitby, Grimsby, Derby, and Kirkby. "By" was the Danish word for "town." Such names are mostly found in the North and East of England.

About the time of Alfred the viking ships of the Norsemen were first seen in the Irish Channel. A Norse chieftain, named Thorgist landed in Ulster and burned the great church at Armagh. Then he settled down near Athlone, and was soon known far and near for his cruelty. All priests and monks whom he could find were killed; and everyone who would not pay him a sum of money had his nose cut off.

Other Norse bands also came and caused great misery in the land. They plundered the churches, killed the people, and then built strong towns in which they made their homes, and from which they marched out to plunder. For a long time after their arrival the history of Ireland is a record of blood.

They did not settle down to a peaceful life, as did many of the Danes in the East of England after the struggle with Alfred. They went on ill-using the native Irish in ways more terrible than can be told.

Then there arose an Irish chieftain of the royal race of O'Brien, who is known as Brian Boru; and in his time the Norse robbers were beaten

again and again. He made himself Overlord of the other Irish Princes, and was really King of all Ireland; and for a short time at least the land had peace within its borders.

Then the Norsemen once more felt themselves strong enough to oppose him. Some of their brethren had settled in the Isle of Man, and some in the Orkney Islands, to the north-east of Scotland. And with the help of these a great host was gathered together against Brian Boru.

He met them at Clontarf, near Dublin, on Good Friday in the year 1014; and a battle was fought which lasted from dawn to sunset. The vikings fought with all their old bravery and fierceness; but late in the afternoon their ranks were broken and they fled, some to their ships, others to the open country.

Among them was a chief named Brodar, who in his flight passed close to the tent of Brian Boru. There was no guard there, for the old King's men had gone away to join in the battle.

Before the opening of the tent knelt an old man with a long white beard. It was the King himself, and one of Brodar's companions told him so. "Nay, that is no King, but some cowardly monk who prays when a man would fight," said the viking. "Nay, you are wrong," replied his friend; "that is Brian Boru himself."

Then Brodar gripped his axe and ran with fury upon the aged monarch. The King had his sword in hand, and struck his foe a heavy blow across the legs. But before he could rise to his feet, Brodar's keen-edged axe came down upon the old warrior's head, and laid him dead at the door of his tent.

So Brian fell in the moment of victory, and great was the grief at his loss. His body was taken to Armagh, where he was buried. But the power of the Norsemen was broken. If there had been a strong King to follow him, Ireland might perhaps have taken her place among the nations. But the Princes fell to fighting among themselves, as of old, and the land was once more filled with war.

The Norsemen also gave great trouble to Scotland. They settled in the Orkney Islands and in the north of the country; and they made raids upon the east and west coasts. Many battles were fought against them, and much blood was shed. Then the Scottish King wedded his daughter to the ruler of the Orkney Islands, and after this the fighting died out.

This same King, whose name was Malcolm II., had his capital at Scone, near Perth. He fought with the English, and took from Northumberland the lands north of the Tweed; so that in his

time the southern border of Scotland was fixed roughly where it lies now.

CHAPTER VII.—A DANISH KING OF ENGLAND.

ABOUT a hundred years after the death of Alfred England was under the rule of a King known as Ethelred the Unready. The name of "Unready" did not then mean "unprepared," as it would now. It meant that the man to whom it was given could give no good "rede," which meant in Old English counsel or advice.

In his time fresh bands of Danes began to come over, plundering in the old fashion; and all that this weak King could think of doing was to give them money to go away. Then he gave secret orders that all the Danes should be put to death on a certain day. This cruel command was obeyed, and many hundreds were put to death.

Swegen, King of Denmark, swore to revenge himself by driving the English King from his throne. This he did, and after a time Cnut, his son, became King of England. But our country was only a part of Cnut's kingdom. He was ruler also of Norway, Denmark, and part of Sweden.

Cnut was a good and just ruler. He kept



KING CANUTE.

(The picture below the portrait shows the scene on the seashore.)

order in the land, which had suffered greatly by its unhappy divisions. He forced the King of Scotland to look upon him as his Overlord.

His one aim was to win the love of the English people; and to show that he trusted them he sent his Danish army home again, and kept only a small body of troops as his personal guard.

Though he had been fierce and cruel in his younger days, he became more gentle and merciful as he grew older. In a letter which he wrote to his English subjects when on a visit to Rome, he writes :

“Be it known to all of you that I have humbly vowed to Almighty God to amend my life in every way, and to rule my people with justice and mercy; and if through the hotness of youth or through carelessness I have done wrong in the past, I intend by God’s aid to make an entire change for the better.”

One day, we are told, Cnut was walking with his courtiers on the seashore, and some of them began to talk to him of his power and greatness. One of them went so far as to say that even the winds and the sea would obey the King. Cnut, who hated flattery, was vexed at this, and made up his mind to teach his courtiers a lesson. So he ordered a chair to be set for himself close to the water’s edge, just as the tide was coming in.

Then he cried: "O Sea, I am thy lord! My ships sail over thee whither I will, and this land against which thou dashest in fury is mine. Stay, then, thy waves, and do not dare to wet the feet of thy lord and master."

The waves, as might have been expected, paid no heed to his words. The tide came up, and soon the water was washing round the King's chair, wetting his feet and clothes. Then, turning to his courtiers, he said: "See now how weak is the power of kings and of all men, for the waves will not hearken to my voice. Honour, then, God only, for Him do all things obey."

Cnut's two sons who reigned after him were bad men; and when both had died the English sent over to France for one of the sons of Ethelred named Edward, and made him their King.

The mother of this Prince was a lady of the land of Normandy, which lay in the northern part of France, with its sea-coast on the English Channel. This land had been conquered by the Norsemen, who had then settled down and founded what was known as the Duchy of Normandy, because it was under a Duke.

At first the Normans were very rough and cruel, like those Norsemen who caused such misery in Ireland. But after a time they gave

up their rough ways, and became gentler and well read. They ceased to use their own tongue, and spoke French instead. They also became Christians, and built many beautiful churches and monasteries.

They did not, however, give up fighting, for the love of battle was in their blood. The French King was supposed to be their master, but they paid him very little respect. Their own leader was the Duke of Normandy, and him they looked upon almost as a King.

A story is told of Rollo the viking, the first Duke of the Normans, which shows how little he cared for the French King, his Overlord.

When he was told that he was expected to kiss the King's foot, he at once refused, and told one of his men to do it for him. The Norseman did not like the task, but he did it in his own way.

Bending down, he took hold of the royal foot, and raised it to his lips, almost overturning the King in the act. The King dared not speak a word of complaint, which shows how little hold he had upon his Norman Duke.

We shall find that these Normans had a great deal to do with the history of our own country.

CHAPTER VIII.—THE LAST OF THE SAXON KINGS.

EDWARD, the new King of England, had lived at the Court of the Norman Duke while Cnut was reigning. He was very gentle and pious, and might have made a very good monk, but he did not make a good King for those rough times.

He thought his English subjects were very rough and ignorant, as indeed they were when compared with the Normans. But it was scarcely wise of him to let them see how much he despised them. He also vexed them greatly by showing much favour to his Norman friends who had come to England with him.

Of course the English were very jealous of these Norman favourites, and did all they could to prevent them gaining too much power. In this they were, after a time, successful, and the man who held the chief place in the land was Harold, the Saxon Earl of Wessex. He really ruled England for Edward, who could not rule for himself; and he was such a brave and clever man that he was loved and respected by most Englishmen.

There was one man, however, who fought against him, being jealous of his great power. This was Griffith, a Welsh Prince, who marched

into Wessex, but drew back when Harold came with a strong force against him.

Two armies were then sent into Wales, and great havoc was wrought in all the valleys. Griffith's plan was to keep out of the way, and fall upon Harold's men as they went back to Wessex. But his people were angry at his slowness, and he was slain by three of his own men, who carried his head to the officers of Harold, begging for peace and for food.

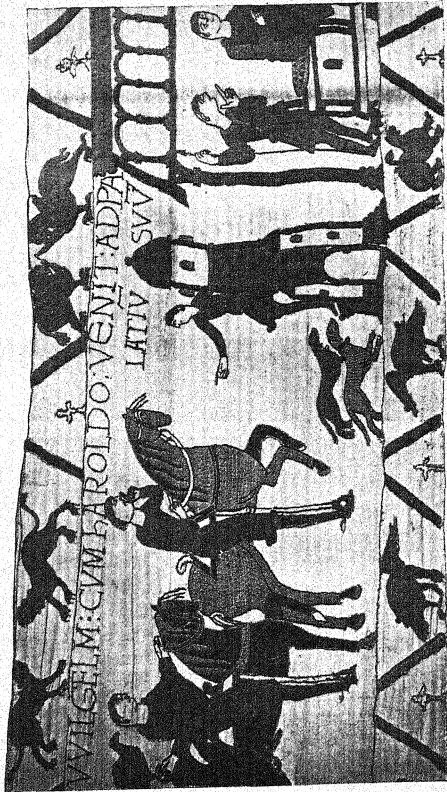
When Edward the Confessor died, he left no children, and his nearest relative was only a boy. The Wise Men had therefore to choose a King, and their choice fell upon Earl Harold, who was best fitted to rule the kingdom.

King Harold had a brother named Tostig, with whom he quarrelled. This brother therefore went across to Norway, and joined with another Harold, the King of that land, in a plan to invade this country.

With a fleet of three hundred ships they came up the Humber, and, landing a great army, marched upon York. They were met by a body of English, but defeated them.

Then King Harold of England marched northward with his army, and the two forces met at Stamford Bridge, near York.

As Harold of Norway rode down his lines before



DUKE WILLIAM AND HAROLD RETURN FROM HUNTING.
(From the tapestry worked by the wife of William the Conqueror.)

the battle began, his great black horse stumbled, and the King fell to the ground. He rose quickly, and, with a loud laugh, said to those near him, "A fall is lucky for a traveller." The English King also saw the fall, and took it for a sign that the victory would be his.

But Harold of England was unwilling to fight against his own brother. He therefore made up his mind to try and settle the quarrel in a peaceful manner.

So a messenger rode up to Tostig, offering him lands and honours if he would give in to his brother, the King.

"If I take what is offered," said Tostig. "what will Harold of Norway get for his trouble?"

"Seven feet of English earth for a covering," said the messenger quickly, "or as much more as he needs, seeing he is taller than other men."

"Then, tell King Harold of England," said Tostig, "to get ready for battle, for I will not desert my friend and helper."

The horseman rode sadly back to the English lines, and Tostig to the side of Harold of Norway. The Earl knew well that the man who had spoken to him was the King of England himself. But Harold of Norway did not know this till Tostig told him. Then he said: "He was only a small man, but he sat well in his stirrups."

Soon the battle was raging, and brave deeds were done on both sides. And at the end of that loud day Harold of Norway lay dead on the field, and his men were scattered far and wide.

After the battle King Harold and his men gathered together for a joyful feast. As they sat at meat, a man, bearing plainly the marks of travel, rushed into the hall. "William, the Norman Duke," he cried, "has landed on the shore of Sussex. He comes to claim the crown!"

At once King Harold gathered his force together, and marched quickly southward.

Before long his army took up its stand on a long steep hill above the marsh of Senlac, a few miles north of Hastings. The King ranged his men in close rank, so that their shields should make a kind of wall.

On the highest point of the hill two banners were planted, and between these the King took up his post with his brothers and personal guards. Before the battle Harold spoke to his men, ordering them to stand firm. On no account were they to break their ranks or let the enemy get a footing on the hill-top.

Presently the Norman host was seen advancing, and soon the battle began. Time after time the Norman archers let fly their arrows, and the Norman horsemen charged up the hill. But the

shield-wall remained unbroken, and the English were not to be drawn from their strong position.

Then Duke William ordered his men to pretend to fly. When the English saw their enemies running away, they rushed down the hill after them. Then the Normans faced them again, chased them in their turn, and at last were able to gain a footing on the hill.

Still the English fought like heroes, and evening began to fall. Then William ordered his archers to shoot straight up into the air, so that the arrows might pierce the heads and shoulders of the English.

Just as the sun was setting, an arrow pierced King Harold's right eye, his axe dropped from his hand, and he sank in agony at the foot of the standard. Four Norman knights now rushed in and slew him.

Then followed a great slaughter of the English who formed the bodyguard of the King. Not a man fled, not one gave in; all died manfully at their posts. But the rest of Harold's army fled, and sought safety in the woods. And at night Duke William stood as victor on the hill of Senlac.

CHAPTER IX.—THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

NOW that Harold was dead there was no one to lead the English against Duke William. So the Wise Men were forced to say that he should be King of England, and he was crowned in Westminster Abbey as William I.

He would have liked to treat his new subjects as Cnut had done. But they hated him, and in many parts of the country there were risings against him. These were put down by the sword, and the "rebels," as the English were called, were treated very cruelly.

The people of the North of England were very bitter against William. But he marched an army into Yorkshire, and laid it waste with fire and sword. Towns and villages were raided and burnt, and the people were either killed or driven over the Scottish Border.

Then the Conqueror, as he was truly named, marched across the Pennines to Chester. It was winter-time, and the roads were blocked with snowdrifts or swept by swirling torrents. Food failed, and the Norman soldiers were forced to eat some of their horses.

Some of the men rebelled, and were sent away in scorn by the King. At the head of the rest

he marched on foot, helping them with his own hands to clear the road. After a terrible journey his army reached Chester, and soon the West was forced to obey him.

Then the East rose under the leader Hereward the Wake, who with a faithful band held out for a long time in the Isle of Ely. But in time he, too, was forced from his stronghold; but it is said that the Normans did not take it until one of Hereward's men turned traitor.

The Conqueror next turned his attention to Scotland, whose King, Malcolm, was wedded to the sister of the Prince who claimed the English crown. He gathered the largest army at his command, and marched northward.

Across the Cheviot Hills they marched by the old road which the Romans had made for their troops in days long gone by. Through the Lowlands and across the Forth they went, until they came to the banks of the Tay. Then, seeing that it was of no use to fight, the Scottish King came into the Norman camp and swore to take William as his Overlord.

All over the land arose the strong castles by means of which the Normans kept down the English. The great Tower of London was one of the largest and strongest, and was built to overawe the people of the chief city. Others were



DUKE WILLIAM ORDERS HIS OFFICERS TO BUILD SHIPS.

(From the tapestry worked by the wife of William the Conqueror.)

smaller and not so strong, but quite strong enough to stand against any attack of the English.

Norman castles were built at Chester, Shrewsbury, and Hereford, which may be called the three gates of Wales, as they stand at the head of the three chief roads into that land. In each of these castles a Norman baron took up his abode, and spent a great deal of his time in making raids on the Welsh. The baron at Chester was known as Hugh *the Wolf*, and he well deserved his title, for he was cruel and greedy, like the animal from which he was named.

Brave attempts were made by the Welsh to drive back the Norman barons, but again and again they were beaten. Griffith ap Conan made himself King of North Wales, and fought bravely against Hugh the Wolf and other Norman barons. But castle after castle was built in Wales, and little by little almost the whole of the land came under the rule of the Normans; and the strong stone castles were dotted about all over the country, as in England.

But the Snowdon mountain lands remained free, and of the Princes of Snowdon we shall read again in a later chapter.

As soon as William had conquered the country, he set to work to make his throne secure. He had to reward his barons who had done the fighting

work for him, so he gave them estates in all parts of the land.

But he did not wish any of these men to become too powerful. So when a large estate was to be granted to a baron, he gave him small pieces of land in different parts of the country. Then, if the baron wished to raise a force against the King, he would not find it easy to collect his men.

Each baron to whom land was granted had to do homage for it. This he did in the following manner: He knelt before the King with head uncovered, belt ungirt, and sword laid aside. Then he put his hands between those of his lord, and swore to be faithful to him, and to follow him to the wars when called upon. In return the King promised to protect him and do him justice. The baron was then known as the King's "vassal."

William the Conqueror was harsh, but he was just. He was very strict in making the people pay taxes to him, but he did not wish any man to pay more than his fair share.

He came to his death while fighting in a French town which he had ordered to be set on fire. His horse stumbled on some burning wood, and he was thrown so heavily forward that he was severely hurt. He was taken to a convent in a city not far away, and before long he died. His

son William, who was known as Rufus, or "the Red," became King in his stead.

CHAPTER X.—THE THREE SONS OF THE CONQUEROR.

WHEN King William died, the barons wished his eldest son Robert to succeed him as King of England as well as Duke of Normandy. They knew he was an easy-going young man, and they thought he would let them do just as they liked.

But most of the English people stood by his younger brother, William Rufus. He was known to have a very strong will, and they thought he would keep the barons in order. So they helped him to gain the crown of England.

But when he became King he did not seem to care how badly the barons behaved. He only cared about having his own way. Indeed, he was more cruel than any of the barons; and his reign was on the whole a miserable time for the country.

No one dared to speak a word to him of his wicked ways but Anselm, the Archbishop of Canterbury. He was a gentle old man, but he could be as bold as a lion in standing up for the right.

Rufus fell ill at one time, and, being in fear of



KING WILLIAM RUFUS.

death, listened to the Archbishop, and promised to do what was wanted of him. But as soon as he was well again he forgot his promise. Then when he came to his death, not long afterwards, almost everyone was glad.

One morning he went out to hunt in the New Forest. In the evening he was found dead, his heart pierced by an arrow. Some said that one of his knights had aimed at a deer, but that the arrow struck a tree, glanced aside, and killed the King. Many said that the knight had meant to kill him.

His younger brother, Henry, at once seized the throne. Again the barons tried to make Robert King. Henry and his brother had hated one another ever since they were boys, and had fought against each other many times. Now Henry took Robert prisoner, and shut him up in Cardiff Castle, where he lived as a captive for twenty-eight years.

Henry then became Duke of Normandy as well as King of England. He had a fierce struggle with his barons, for he meant to rule like his father. In the end he got his own way, chiefly by the help of the English, who rejoiced when they saw the Norman lords humbled.

Henry was a stern man, but he liked to keep order and to do justice. When he was crowned

he promised to undo all the evil that Rufus had done ; and he kept his word so well that he won the title of " the Lion of Justice." It was he who began to send judges round the kingdom to hold trials, somewhat in the same way as is done now.

Henry made his people pay him heavy taxes. But he let it be known exactly how much each man ought to pay, and when he had to pay it. Other Kings used to send a tax-gatherer round whenever they liked, and tell him to take whatever he could make the people pay.

Instead of the Wise Men who had helped the old English Kings to govern, there was now a Great Council of the nation, made up of the chief barons. The King was supposed to ask their consent before he could make any new law or put on any new tax. But as they usually agreed without a murmur to what he asked, the Great Council was not much of a check upon him.

Henry I. married a daughter of a King of Scotland, who was also descended from the old English royal house to which Alfred the Great belonged. This not only pleased the English, but many of the Scots also. The Normans gave to the Queen the name of Matilda or Maud, as they did not find it easy to pronounce her own name.

Henry and Maud had two children. Their only

son William was drowned in the wreck of a vessel called the *White Ship*, while crossing over from Normandy. The news affected the King so greatly that it is said he never smiled again.

The King's daughter was also named Maud, and Henry wished her to be Queen of England after his death. So he made the barons promise to be faithful to her. But they did not care to be ruled by a woman, and when he died they chose her cousin Stephen as King.

For several years a war went on in England between Stephen and Matilda. Sometimes Stephen won, and sometimes his cousin. The war caused much misery in the country. At last it was agreed that Stephen should keep the crown while he lived, but that on his death Matilda's son Henry should be King.

The King of Scotland had, of course, taken the side of Matilda. After a while there was a rising of the English barons against the King, and David of Scotland marched over the Border to help them.

The English gathered at York under the Archbishop as leader, and marched to Northallerton to meet the Scottish army. They had with them a four-wheeled car on which were hoisted four sacred banners from the great minsters of Durham, York, Beverley and Ripon.

The men of Galloway, fierce and fearless, led

the attack. "I, who wear no armour," shouted their chief, "will go as far this day as anyone with breastplate of mail." Then with a wild cry of "Albion! Albion!" his men rushed to the attack.

They broke the front rank of their foes, but they were not able to overcome them, as they stood firmly round their fourfold standard. And before long the invaders were in full flight to the Border town of Carlisle.

King Stephen was quite unable to keep his unruly barons in order. They built strong castles all over the country, and did all sorts of wicked deeds.

They fought among themselves with deadly hatred; they burned and robbed all around; they destroyed the crops until, in some places, there was scarcely any food.

They hung up men by the feet, and lighted foul-smelling fires near them until the smoke nearly choked them. Some were hung up by their thumbs, others by their shoulders, and burning things were fastened on their feet. They put men into deep, dark dungeons where adders and toads and snakes were crawling.

But when Matilda's son became King Henry II. he soon put an end to all this.

CHAPTER XI.—HENRY II. AND BECKET.

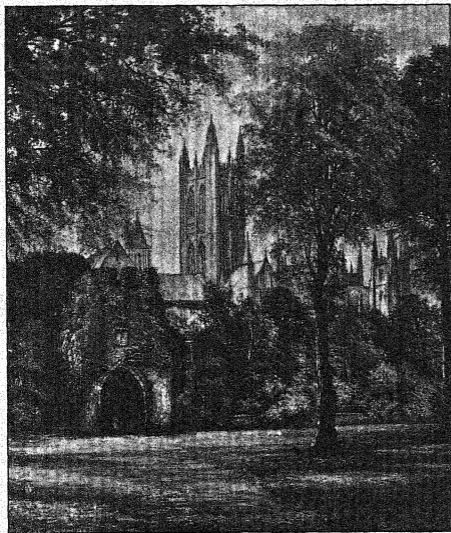
HENRY II. was one of the best rulers of the early time of our history. He pulled down most of the castles which the barons had built, and he made everyone respect and obey the law.

One day in mid-winter he was riding along a road when he spied a poor beggar shivering with cold. The King, who loved a joke, snatched at the gay mantle of one of his courtiers named Thomas Becket, meaning to give it to the beggar.

Becket, however, did not wish to part with his cloak ; and he struggled so hard to keep it that both he and the King almost fell from their horses. But in the end the King got the cloak and gave it to the poor man.

Becket was a great favourite with Henry, who always found him good company and treated him as a friend. Becket gave the King splendid feasts. He had also helped him greatly in the work of putting down the barons.

Henry next wished Becket to help him in a quarrel which he had with the clergy, most of whom were very earnest and learned men. So he said that he would make Becket Archbishop of Canterbury. But Becket told the King that if he became Archbishop he must take the side of the clergy in the quarrel. The King, however,



CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL.

would not listen, and the gay courtier was made head of all the clergy in the land.

From that day he gave up his splendid way of living, and thought only of how to make the clergy more powerful. As he had expected, this

soon led to a quarrel with the King, and the new Archbishop had to make his way in disguise to France.

After six years Becket was allowed to return, and he at once set to work to make his power felt against his enemies. Word was sent to the King, who was at that time in France. Henry flew into a great rage at the tiresome news, and cried out: "Is there no one who will rid me of this turbulent priest?"

Four of his knights took him at his word, and started off at once for Canterbury. They sought out the Archbishop, and, saying they had come from the King, ordered him to leave the country. Becket angrily refused, and after a fierce quarrel the knights went away to arm themselves.

Becket's friends persuaded him to take refuge in the cathedral, for in those days a man's life was generally quite safe as long as he was in a church. They wished to bar the doors, but the Archbishop would not allow them. Soon the armed knights were heard approaching. Most of the trembling priests hid themselves. Becket alone showed no fear.

By this time it was dark, and the great church was but dimly lighted. "Where is the traitor, Thomas Becket?" shouted the knights as they rushed in. "Here am I," replied the Archbishop;

"no traitor, but a priest of God." Then he set his back against a pillar at the foot of a flight of steps, and fearlessly faced his foes.

One of the knights tried to drag him out of the church, but Becket shook him off. A faithful monk warded off one blow by receiving it on his own arm. But the Archbishop was soon struck to the ground, and then the knights killed him with their swords.

This dreadful murder shocked everyone both at home and abroad. The English people looked upon the Archbishop as a martyr, and soon people began to flock to Canterbury to pray at his tomb. The great poet Chaucer, who lived more than three hundred years later, wrote a poem in which he describes a pilgrimage to the tomb of Saint Thomas of Canterbury.

Before long King Henry was in great trouble. His barons rose against him. His own son Henry joined them and the King of France helped them too. And about the same time the King of Scotland, William the Lion, crossed the Border, hoping to add the lands north of the Tyne to his kingdom.

For a long time the Kings of Scotland had wished to fix the Border farther to the south. A glance at the map will show that the river Tyne seems to be a more suitable boundary line between

the two kingdoms, as it runs right across the land from within a few miles of the head of the Solway Firth.

Henry was in some fear of losing his crown. He thought it would be wise to make people think he was sorry for Becket's murder. So he came to Canterbury and spent a whole night weeping and praying beside the Archbishop's tomb; and the next morning he made each of the monks give him a stroke on his back with a rod as a punishment for his sin.

On the following night, it is said, a messenger bringing good news awaked him out of his sleep. The Scottish King, while amusing himself, had been taken prisoner by a party of English barons.

Henry said that he would not let the King go unless he took him as his Overlord and placed five of the chief castles of Scotland in his hands. The King was forced to make this promise to gain his own freedom; but not many years afterwards the claim of the English Kings was set aside, and the Scottish Kings were once more masters of their own lands.

In the reign of Henry there was fierce fighting between the Welsh and the Norman barons. The Prince who ruled at that time in North Wales was Owen, the son of Griffith, of whom we have already heard.

Henry marched into the mountain lands of North Wales. But he was forced to fall back again owing to the difficulty of feeding his men and the storms of that wild country.

Still the fighting went on, and Henry was able to bring some of the Welsh lands in the south under his rule. Into several parts of Wales the King sent English families, in order that they might settle down and help him to keep a hold upon the land. He also gave to certain lords large estates on the Welsh border, with orders to keep the people of Wales in check. These were called Lords Marchers.

Before long Henry's attention was taken away from Wales to another part of the British Islands. This was Ireland.

CHAPTER XII.—RICHARD STRONGBOW.

AFTER the murder of Becket, Henry II. thought it would be a wise thing to go out of the way for a little while, so he set out on a visit to Ireland.

This country had, as we know, seen many troubles since the glorious days of Saint Patrick, when she led the way in religion and learning. The Irish, too, had suffered greatly at the hands of the Danes. And they had not learned the

great lesson for each nation—that they must all stand shoulder to shoulder against an enemy.

The people were divided into tribes just as in the old days; and the tribes were always fighting each other. Thus, there was great disorder in the land, each petty chief being his own master. The clergy, too, had become lazy, and were no longer known as the best scholars in the West of Europe; they would neither obey the Pope nor anyone else.

At this time the Pope of Rome was an Englishman; and he made a present of Ireland to Henry II., hoping he would bring it into order. The Popes claimed that all islands belonged to them, and that they might give them to whom they pleased.

Just at this time Henry had been too busy to take over the gift. A few years later an Irish chief named Dermot was driven out of his lands in that part of Ireland called Leinster; and he came to Henry to ask for help to get them back. Henry gave him leave to try and persuade any Norman knights he could to go to Ireland and fight his battles for him.

There was always a large number of knights ready to go where there was fighting to be done, in the hope of plunder. Several from South Wales gladly agreed to go with Dermot. The

chief of these was a Norman named Richard de Clare, who was nicknamed Strongbow.

The knights soon won back Dermot's lands for him. Then Strongbow married his daughter, and began to call himself Earl of Leinster. Some said that he hoped in time to make himself King of the whole island. He saw quite plainly that Ireland was greatly in need of a leader.

Henry II., hearing of what was going on, crossed over to Ireland. The knights had to pretend that they were glad to see him. The Irish, however, were really glad. They thought that the King would protect them from the Norman knights, who were using them very cruelly.

Henry did what he could to set things in order. But as soon as he left the country things became as bad as ever. Ireland was now said to belong to the King of England, who took the old title of Ard-Reagh, or Overlord. This title had been in past times borne by the Irish Prince who could make himself most powerful. But the land was not really conquered.

A few Norman nobles, who were supposed to obey Henry, were scattered about the country. But they were really their own masters, and acted like free chiefs. Soon they began to live in the same way as the Irish, to marry Irish women, and to speak the language of the country.

The Irish lived on in the old way, keeping their own laws and customs. If they had been really conquered, they might have learned to live at peace with each other and to obey good laws. Instead of that, they only hated the Normans who had come into Ireland and taken some of their lands from them.

Henry sent his youngest son, John, to Dublin to rule the country for him. But the foolish boy behaved very rudely to the Irish chiefs. He laughed at their queer dresses and pulled their long beards; and after a time his father had to order him to return home.

CHAPTER XIII.—THE GREAT CHARTER.

DURING the last years of his life Henry II. had a great deal of trouble with his sons. But it was the news that his favourite son John had joined in a rebellion against him that at last broke the old King's heart.

After his death his eldest living son became King as Richard I. On account of his courage in battle he was known as the Lionheart. He was handsome and strong, ready for any bold deed, and generous even to his foes; he was also a maker of songs, like many knights of his time.

But he was more of a Norman than an Englishman, and he spent the greater part of his time on the other side of the Channel. During his reign he only came to England twice. Yet Englishmen were proud of their King, because he was so brave and because he fought in the Crusades, or Wars of the Cross, in Palestine.

He was killed at last by an arrow shot from the walls of a French castle which he was besieging; and he was succeeded by his brother John.

This King was one of the worst kings who have ever reigned in England. He was selfish and cruel, mean and cowardly. His nephew Arthur, the young son of his elder brother, had many friends who wished to make him King, and among these was the King of France.

War began, and after a time Prince Arthur fell into King John's hands. Suddenly the young Prince disappeared, and many people said that his uncle had caused him to be put to death. Some even said that he had killed him with his own hands.

But the only thing of which we are sure is that Arthur was never heard of again. Our great poet Shakespeare, in his play of *King John*, tells of this time in our history. In his story the King sends a man named Hubert with two

helpers to put out the Prince's eyes. But the boy pleads so well that Hubert has no heart to do the cruel deed.

Later in Shakespeare's story we see Arthur on the high wall of a castle from which he is trying to escape, dressed as a ship-boy. Standing there in the act to leap, he says :

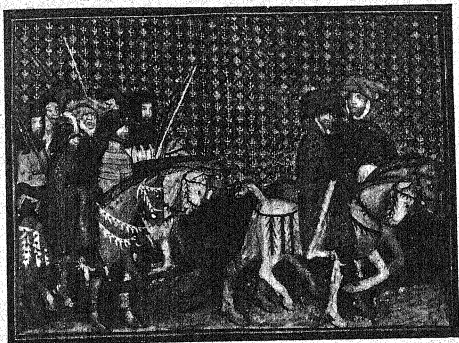
“The wall is high, and yet will I leap down :
Good ground, be pitiful and hurt me not !
There's few or none do know me ; if they did,
This ship-boy's semblance hath disguised me quite.
I am afraid ; and yet I'll venture it.
If I get down, and do not break my limbs,
I'll find a thousand shifts to get away :
As good to die and go, as die and stay.”

So he leaps down upon the hard ground far below, and lying there, bruised and broken, cries :

“O me ! my uncle's spirit is in these stones :
Heaven take my soul, and England keep my bones.”

So he dies.

King John was soon deep in a great quarrel with his barons. He ruled very badly and without any regard to the rights of his people. And the barons at last made up their minds to force him to rule in a better way.



A BARON AND HIS TRAIN, OF THE TIME OF KING JOHN.

The Archbishop Stephen Langton took their side very heartily. He advised the barons to make John promise certain things which were written down on a parchment, afterwards known as the Great Charter. The Archbishop helped to draw up the list of promises, and when King John came back from France the barons marched against him.

John had to give way, though he was almost mad with rage. On June 15, 1215, one of the most important days in the whole of English history, he met some of the barons on the little

island of Runnymede in the Thames, near Windsor. And there he gave his assent to the promises which were read out to him.

The writing to which his royal seal was then fixed is known as the Great Charter. John agreed to it, but he never really meant to keep his promise. He soon got together an army of hired men, and began to make war on the barons.

The Scottish King joined with the barons against King John, and, crossing the Border, laid siege to the castle of Norham on the Tweed. King John was very angry, and marched quickly north with his army.

The Scots drew back across the Border, and John followed them towards Edinburgh, his hired men, mostly foreigners, working great havoc on the way. The Scottish King drew up his forces a few miles south of Edinburgh, but John did not care to risk a battle, and turned back again to his own country.

King John married his daughter Joan to Llywelyn, the Prince of North Wales, who wished to make himself King over the whole of his native land. But before long the two Princes were at war with each other, and John was marching at the head of his men into North Wales by the old road from Chester; but his daughter came to meet him, and after receiving

presents of land and cattle the English King drew back once more.

The Welsh Prince had taken the part of the barons in the struggle about the Charter. And having so many powerful friends, he was able to place himself, for a time at least, at the head of the other Welsh Princes. He wished to give peace to Wales, which was so often torn by fights between its rulers. But only for a time did these weary wars cease in the land.

But now the troubled reign of King John was drawing to a close. So desperate had the barons become that they asked Louis, the son of the French King, to come and help them; and he landed in England with an army.

Soon afterwards, as John was crossing the sands of the Wash, the tide rose so quickly that his baggage was swept away, and he himself had a narrow escape from drowning. This misfortune seemed too much for him. He fell ill of a fever, and shortly afterwards died.

CHAPTER XIV.—EDWARD I. AND WALLACE.

HENRY III., the son of King John, was not cruel or violent like his father; but he was so weak and helpless that during his reign there was

great misery in the land. He, too, fought with the barons, who were under the lead of a good nobleman known as Simon de Montfort.

One of the results of this quarrel was the setting up of the first English Parliament. Its members were called together by Earl Simon from all parts of the land; and their duty was then, as now, to help in making laws for the country.

When King Henry died, after a long reign, his eldest son became King as Edward I. He had a noble face, and such long limbs that he was given the name of Longshanks.

A great deal of his reign was spent in various wars. He seems to have formed the idea that it would be well if the whole of the British Isles were under one King. Let us see what he had to do with Wales, Scotland, and Ireland in turn.

After the death of the Llywelyn of whom we read in our last chapter, the Welsh Princes once more fell to fighting among themselves. But after a time there arose another Llywelyn, the grandson of the former, who tried to make himself ruler of Wales and to drive out the English.

The Welsh Prince and his men fought bravely and with some success. Then Llywelyn met his death in a wood near Chester, and after this there was no one strong enough to hold out against the

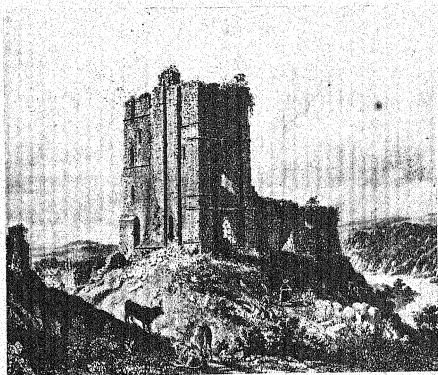
English King. Great castles were built in various parts of the land. The King's baby son was given the title of Prince of Wales. Part of the land was divided into shires, like those of England. And Edward claimed that at last there was one King south of the Scottish Border.

Let us now see what was taking place to the north of the Border. Scotland had a good King named Alexander, in whose reign the country had made great advances. One night he was riding along the coast of Fife, when he was thrown from his horse and killed. His son and daughter had both died before him, and it had been agreed that the crown should pass to his little granddaughter, a Princess of Norway named Margaret.

Now, Edward I. had a son, who was then a mere boy, and he thought that it would be a good thing for both Scotland and England if this Prince were to marry the Maid of Norway. The Scottish lords agreed to the plan, and a ship was sent to bring the young Queen of Scotland from Norway.

The English King sent messengers to Orkney to meet the Maid, and all seemed well for him and his plans. But when the ship reached the landing-place it was found that the Princess had died while at sea. So the plan, after all, came to nothing.

Several nobles now claimed the crown of Scotland, and the two who seemed to have most right to it were John Balliol and Robert Bruce. King Edward was asked to settle the question, and he



NORHAM CASTLE.

went to Norham Castle on the Tweed to give his decision.

But before he gave his word for either nobleman, Edward said that the man he chose must promise to take him as his Overlord. Both Bruce and Balliol were so eager to be chosen that they

made the promise. Then King Edward gave his word for John Balliol, who became King of Scotland.

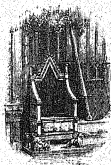
Balliol was a poor creature who was not well fitted to be a King. But in time even he began to rebel against having Edward as his Overlord. Then Edward marched an army against him, and made him a prisoner.

He left governors to rule the land for him, and went back to England, taking Balliol with him. He also took something which many of the Scots prized much more than their King. This was a rough block of stone on which from very early times the Scottish Kings had sat when they were crowned at Scone.

Some people believed that it was the same stone that Jacob had used as his pillow when he dreamed that he saw angels moving up and down the ladder between earth and heaven.

King Edward had the stone enclosed in a chair, which was placed in Westminster Abbey, where it can be seen to this day. All our Kings since Edward I. have sat upon this chair to be crowned.

Edward now thought himself master of Scotland. He wished to rule the country well, as he



CORONATION CHAIR.

ruled England. But the Scots, as we might expect, wished to have a King of their own, as they had always had.

Before long it happened that a Scottish gentleman, named William Wallace, was ill-treated by one of the King's officers. So he gathered his friends about him, and began to attack the English.

An English army marched north to the river Forth, near Stirling, where the stream was crossed by a narrow bridge. Wallace and his friends were drawn up in battle order near the other end of this bridge; but for all that, the English leader ordered his men to cross.

When half of them were over, Wallace set upon them before the rest could come to their help, and won a complete victory. Edward I. was very angry, and came himself into Scotland to carry on the war.

At the head of a great army, he met Wallace at Falkirk. The Scots were arranged in rings, with their long spears all pointing outwards. Edward knew well that these rings of foot-soldiers could stand firm, even against his armed knights and their horses.

But he had with him the English bowmen, who were now the best archers in the world. A flight of English arrows soon made gaps in the rings of

spearmen, and before long the Scots were beaten, though they fought like heroes. Wallace made his escape from the battlefield.

A price was set upon his head. After a long time he was given up to the English King, and taken as a prisoner to London. There he was tried as a traitor. He said he could not be a traitor, for Edward was not his King, and he had never promised to serve him, or even to look upon him as Overlord of Scotland.

He was, however, sentenced to die, and was put to death in a very cruel manner on Tower Hill. He was a true patriot—that is, a man who loves his country and willingly gives his life for it.

CHAPTER XV.—ROBERT THE BRUCE.

WALLACE was dead, but the Scottish people soon found a new leader. This was Robert the Bruce, the grandson of that Robert Bruce who had claimed the crown at Norham.

The Bruce seemed very well fitted to be a King. He was a strong, handsome man. He knew how to make people obey him, but at the same time he was frank and generous. He was also a brave and skilful leader.

One day he slipped away from the English Court, where he was staying with other nobles,

and made his way to Scotland. Gathering his friends together as soon as he crossed the Border, he went to Scone, where he was crowned as King.

When the news reached King Edward, he was very angry, and he vowed never to rest until Scotland was conquered once and for all. He was now too old and weak to travel quickly, so he sent forward his army under a trusted leader while he followed more slowly.

Bruce was beaten, and, though he escaped, many of his friends were made prisoners and put to death. For many weary months he wandered about among the mountains. He was hunted from one place to another, often almost starving, and with no shelter from the night and the rain.

His wife and several other ladies, besides a few faithful friends, were with him and shared his sufferings; and he kept up a brave heart to cheer them. When the winter came on, he left the ladies in what he hoped would be a place of safety, and went over to Ireland. Soon afterwards his wife fell into the hands of the English. Then Bruce began almost to despair.

But meanwhile Bruce's greatest enemy was taken away. King Edward died just as he drew near to the Scottish Border. Then Bruce was able to gather together his men once more. He took from the English one fortress after another,

until at last only Stirling remained in their hands.

Edward II., the new King of England, was not like his father. He was weak and selfish, and unable or unwilling to govern his kingdom well. But even he was shamed into bestirring himself when he heard of the success of Bruce.

He got together the greatest army that England had ever seen, and on the day before the one fixed for the surrender he drew near to Stirling. He found Bruce and his army drawn up in front of the town, near a little stream called Bannockburn.

Bruce had cunningly caused deep holes to be dug in the ground before his army, and sharp stakes to be set upright in them. Then these holes had been filled in lightly with brushwood and covered with turf. In these traps he hoped to catch the English horse-soldiers.

At daybreak, just before the battle began, some of the Scots knelt down and prayed for victory. "Look," cried King Edward, "they kneel! They are asking pardon." "Yes," replied one of his barons, "but they ask it of God, not of us. These men will conquer or die in the field."

Things turned out as Bruce had planned. The horses of the English knights fell into the holes, and the whole army was thrown into disorder.

Then the English caught sight of a body of servants which Bruce had placed on a hill not far away. Thinking this to be another Scottish army, they lost all heart and fled from the field. Edward, with a body of five hundred men, made his escape to Dunbar, and then put out to sea.

After this Bruce was secure upon his throne, though for some time the English would not regard him as the rightful King. There was a great deal of fighting in the Border district before peace came. A writer of a little later time has told us what a Scottish army of that day was like. He writes :

“Their men were mounted upon little ponies, which are turned after the day’s march to pasture on the heath or in the fields. They bring no carriages with them, on account of the mountains in Northumberland, nor do they carry with them any provisions ; for in time of war they will live for a long time on flesh without bread, and drink the river water without wine.

“They have no need for pots or pans, for they dress the flesh of the cattle in their skins ; and being sure to find plenty of beasts in the land they invade, they carry nothing with them.

“Under the flaps of his saddle each man carries a broad piece of metal, and behind him a little

bag of oatmeal: when they have eaten too much of the flesh their stomach appears weak. Then they set this plate over the fire, and knead the meal with water. When the plate is hot, they put a little of the paste upon it in a thin cake like a biscuit, which they eat to warm their stomachs.



ROBERT THE BRUCE.

It is therefore no wonder that they perform a longer day's march than other soldiers."

After the battle at Bannockburn Edward Bruce, the brother of the Scottish King, crossed over to Ireland at the head of a large army. Some of the Irish joined him, and when he had gained three

victories over the forces of the King of England many others joined in the rising. King Robert of Scotland also came over. Edward Bruce was then crowned at Dundalk as King of Ireland.

The English people who had settled in Ireland suffered greatly at the hands of the Scots. Their farms were destroyed and their crops were burned. Many of the churches were also thrown down. In some parts there was no food, and people died of famine.

Then the whole country turned against the new King and his men. There was a fierce battle at Dundalk, in which the Scots were beaten and Edward Bruce was killed. His head was struck off and sent to London. Those of his men who escaped from the battlefield made their way once more to Scotland.

During this time of trouble the English King had done little to protect the Irish and the English in Ireland against the invader. And when it was over the land was once more divided into various parts, under native chiefs. Many of the great lords from England also took to living and dressing like the Irish, and ruling their estates as Irish chieftains. Only in the district round about Dublin was the word of the English King regarded.

CHAPTER XVI.—EDWARD III. AND THE
BLACK PRINCE.

EDWARD II. reigned for many years after the Battle of Bannockburn, but he did little that was good for his people ; and at last everyone, even his wife, turned against him. He was forced to sign a paper saying that he was not fit to be King, and to give up his throne to his young son, Edward III. Eight months later he was murdered in Berkeley Castle in Gloucester.

In the time of Edward III. a war began between France and England which lasted off and on for a hundred years. At the beginning of this war we fought our first great battle on the sea. We shall ask a writer of that time to tell us the story.

It was on Midsummer Eve in the year of our Lord 1340, when the English fleet left the Thames and took the way to Sluys in Flanders on the other side of the North Sea.

The King of England and his men came sailing till he arrived before Sluys ; and when he saw a great number of ships, so that their masts seemed to be like a great wood, he asked who they were. And the master of his ship said : “ Sire, I think

they be the Frenchmen who burnt your town of Southampton and took your great ship the *Christopher*."

"Ah," said the King, "I have long wished to fight with the Frenchmen; and now I shall fight with some of them by the help of Saint George."

Then the King set all his ships in order, the greatest in front full of archers; and between two ships with archers he had one with men-at-arms.

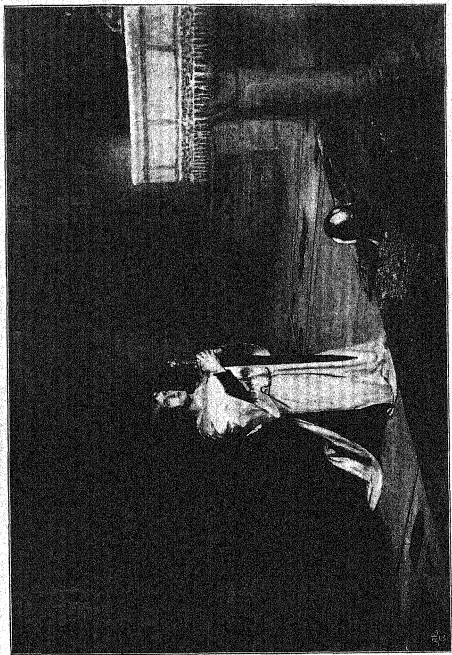
The Frenchmen also ranged their fleet in order, for they were good men of war upon the sea; and they set the *Christopher*, which they had taken from the English, in the forefront of the battle.

Then began a sore battle on both parts; and they had great hooks and grappling-irons to cast out of one ship into another, and so tied them fast together. There were many great deeds done—taking and rescuing again.

At last the great *Christopher* was won by the English. Then they filled the ship with archers, and made him pass on to fight with the enemy.

The fight was very fierce and terrible, for battles on the sea are more dangerous than battles on land. On the sea there is no falling back or flying; each must fight and abide fortune.

The battle endured from the morning until it was noon, and the English suffered great pain, for



THE VIGIL.—BY JOHN PETTIE, R.A.
(From the original painting in the Tate Gallery.)

their foes were four against one. But the French were beaten, slain and drowned ; not one escaped.

Afterwards King Edward crossed over into France with a great army. He had with him his son Edward, who was known as the Black Prince, and was then a boy of sixteen.

A great battle was fought near a village called Crecy, in which the Black Prince won great praise. The King himself stood on a hill behind, near a windmill, with a body of men ready to come to the help of the others if need should arise.

At one time the Black Prince was hard pressed by the French, and a knight rode to the King to beg his help. "Sire," he said, "those who are about the Prince your son are sorely pressed, wherefore they desire that you will come and aid them."

Then the King said : "Is my son dead, or hurt, or felled to the ground?" "No, sire," said the knight, "but he hath need of your help." "Well," said the King, "return to him and his men, and tell them to send no more to me as long as my son is alive. Let him this day win his spurs, for I desire the honour of this day to be his." So the knight returned and reported these words, and before long the battle was won.

After this victory King Edward laid siege to

the French town of Calais. For eleven months the citizens held out, until they had nothing left to eat. Then they sent to ask the English King what mercy he would show to them if they gave up the town to him.

Edward was very angry with them for holding out so long. He said he would spare the town if six of the chief men brought him the keys of the town and castle. They were to come bareheaded and barefooted, with ropes round their necks ready to be hanged.

Six brave men offered to give up their lives for their fellow-citizens. Edward's knights begged him to spare these noble men; but he would not listen until his good Queen, Philippa, herself knelt before him and begged him to show pity. Then he let them go free.

The leading soldiers of King Edward's time were known as knights. Each one had to do some brave deed before he was counted worthy to be made a knight.

This was done in a very solemn way in a church. During the night before a young man was knighted, he had to watch beside his new armour before the altar like the soldier in the picture on page 93. In the morning he bathed himself as a sign that he meant to lead a pure life, and said his prayers.

Then some older knight, often the King himself, tapped him lightly on the shoulder with the flat of his sword, and said, "Rise up, Sir So-and-so." And he became a knight.

He had to promise solemnly to speak the truth, to stand up for the right, to protect women, the poor and unhappy, to be courteous, and to behave bravely in time of danger.

CHAPTER XVII.—THE TAKING OF EDINBURGH CASTLE.

HERE is a story told by the writer of the time of Edward III. from whose book we have already quoted :

When the King of England was in France, the French King sent men of war into Scotland. And they desired the Scots, in the French King's name, that they would make such war in England that the English King would be glad to return home ; and the French King said he would provide men and money to aid them so to do.

So the Scots passed the town of Berwick and the river of Tyne, and entered into Northumberland, which at one time was a realm. There they found plenty of cattle, and wasted and burnt all the country to Durham ; then they returned by another way, destroying the country.

They took all the fortresses that were held by the English except the city of Berwick and three other castles. The latter were so strong that it would have been hard to find any such in any country.

One was Stirling, another Roxburgh, and the third—the chief of all Scotland—Edinburgh. The last-named standeth on so high a rock that a man must rest once or twice ere he come to the top.

Then Sir William Douglas thought of a plan for the taking of Edinburgh, and told his companions, and they all agreed together.

So they took two hundred of the Scots, and provisions of oats and meal, as well as coals and wood; and, setting sail, they came peaceably to a port near to the Castle of Edinburgh.

So in the night they armed themselves; and taking ten or twelve of their company, they dressed them in torn coats and hats, like poor men of the country. Then they loaded twelve small horses with sacks, some with oats, some with wheatmeal, and some with coals; and they set all their company in an ambush in an old abbey thereby, near to the foot of the hill.

When day began to appear, hiding their arms about them, they went up the hill with their goods. And when they were halfway up,

Sir William Douglas and Sir Simon Fraser went a little before, and came to the porter, and said : “ Sir, we have brought hither oats and wheat-meal ; and if ye have any need thereof, we will sell them to you good cheap.”

“ Marry,” said the porter, “ we have indeed need thereof ; but it is so early that I dare not awake the Captain. But let them come in, and I shall open the outer gate.”

So they all passed through the outer gate. Douglas saw that the porter had in his hands the keys of the great gate of the castle. Then, when they were all within the outer gate, they took the porter and slew him so quietly that he never spoke a word.

Next they took the great keys and opened the castle gate ; then Douglas blew a horn, and they cast away their torn coats, and laid their sacks across the gateway so that the gate might not be shut again.

And when the men in the abbey below heard the horn, in all haste they mounted the hill. Then the watchman of the castle at the noise of the horn awoke, and saw how the people were coming all armed to the castle gate. So he blew his horn, and cried : “ Treason ! treason ! Sirs, arise and arm you shortly, for yonder be men-at-arms coming to your fortress.”

Then the men of the castle arose and armed them, and came to the gate. But Douglas and his twelve men defended the gate so that they could not close it; and by great bravery they kept the entry open till their fellows came.

Those within defended the castle as well as they might, and hurt many of them without; but Sir William and the Scots took the fortress, and all the English within were slain, except the Captain and six squires.

Then the Scots tarried there all that day, and word was sent to the King of England of the loss of his castle.

This story gives us some idea of the kind of fighting that was going on near the Scottish Border while King Edward was in France. In the same year as the Battle of Crecy the Scots, under their King, David Bruce, marched south till they came to a place not far from the city of Durham. An English army met them at Neville's Cross, and a battle took place in which the Scots were defeated.

King David and many of his nobles were made



A SCOTTISH WOMAN OF
THE MIDDLE CLASS.

prisoners and taken to London. After a time the King was allowed to return to Scotland, but only after his people had paid a very large sum of money as ransom.

King Edward III. was too busy to pay much heed to Ireland, of which he claimed to be lord and master. From that country he drew a large number of fighting men for his wars; and some of these men fought bravely side by side with the English at Crecy.

He sent his son, the Duke of Clarence, to Ireland, and a meeting of chiefs, or Parliament, was called together at Kilkenny. There a law was passed which was very hard upon the native Irish.

They were not to have anything to do with the English in Ireland, and the latter were to hold themselves entirely apart from them. The killing of an Irish native was not to be counted a crime; and anyone speaking the Irish language was to be punished.

It was thought that if these things were done the Irish would in time die out, and the land would then be left entirely to the English. But this did not happen, and the stupid and cruel law only caused untold misery for many years.

CHAPTER XVIII.—GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

In the reign of Edward III. and that of his successor, Richard II., there lived a poet named Geoffrey Chaucer. He led a stirring kind of life. He went to the King's Court; he served in the wars; he went to Italy on the King's business; he was a member of Parliament.

He was a stout, quiet man, and kept his eyes down on the ground, as if, some one said, he was looking for a hare. Yet all the time he was watching the men and women round

him, and noticing everything they did, but in a kindly way, because he liked them and they amused him.

When he was middle-aged he began to write a long poem, which became the best known of all his works. It is really part of the history of his time, for when we read it we learn a great deal



THE POET CHAUCER.

about the way people lived in those days, and what they were thinking about.

In his day the way in which people generally took an outing was to go to some holy place, often the tomb of a saint, where they spent some time in prayer. People who made such journeys were called pilgrims. The favourite place to which English pilgrims went was the tomb of Saint Thomas of Canterbury.

In his poem Chaucer tells how twenty-nine pilgrims met at an inn in Southwark, which is now part of London south of the river Thames, all ready to start for Canterbury.

They were people of all sorts. There was a knight who had been in many wars, and yet was as meek as a maid; and his son, a fine young squire, with long curls and a gown all worked with red and white flowers, who could make songs and sing them.

There was a nun, a fine lady who had such good manners that she did not dip her fingers *very* far into the sauce at dinner; and a country gentleman, with a rosy face and a beard as white as a daisy, who was so well-to-do that in his house it *snowed* meat and drink.

There was a poor parson of a town who thought of nothing but doing good to the people in his parish, visiting them even in rain and thunder.

They listened carefully to his teaching, because he always did himself what he told them they ought to do.

There were a monk and a merchant, a doctor, a lawyer, a sailor, a learned man from Oxford, a jolly, finely dressed dame from Bath, a miller, a ploughman, and ever so many more. The inn-keeper went with them. Chaucer describes them all so well that we can almost fancy we see them, and are riding to Canterbury with them.

The journey from London to Canterbury on horseback at that time took three and a half days, though the distance is only sixty miles. We can now go by a fast train in about an hour and a half; but of course the pilgrims would be in no great hurry to reach the end of their journey.

Chaucer makes the inn-keeper of his poem invent a plan for amusing the company on the road. They were to tell stories in turn, and whoever told the best was to be treated to a supper by the others on their return to the inn in Southwark.

Chaucer, of course, wrote the stories himself, and the plan of his poem was only his method of stringing a number of tales together. The whole poem is called "The Canterbury Tales."

It is not only because it is so interesting and

so beautifully written that "The Canterbury Tales" is such a famous book. It is because it was one of the first great poems written in English.

The poorer people had gone on talking English even after the Normans came. But so few of them could read that scarcely any books were written for them. Many nobles and gentlemen could not read, either, but for those who could Latin and French books were written. Boys had to do their lessons in French.

Even after the Normans and English became joined into one nation French was still spoken at Court and by the richer people. It seems likely that even Edward III. did not know how to speak English.

But now French was going out of fashion, and everyone was beginning to speak English. This was partly because the war with France made Englishmen hate everything French.

You would find it no easy task to read Chaucer's poems. The spelling is not like our own, and he uses many French words, although he writes in English. But, all the same, he is our first great English poet.

CHAPTER XIX.—RICHARD II. AND HENRY BOLINGBROKE.

WHEN Edward III. died, his grandson became King as Richard II. The new King was the son of the Black Prince, who fought so bravely at Crecy, and who died before his father. Richard was only ten years old when he came to the throne, and his uncles ruled the land for him for some years.

They spent a great deal of money on the war in France, and yet England was nearly always beaten. So they made the English people pay heavy taxes, and this was one of the reasons which caused what was known as the Peasants' Rising.

The men of Essex rose in rebellion under a leader named Wat Tyler, and the men of Kent under another, who called himself Jack Straw. The rebels marched to London, where they did a great deal of damage, and put some of the leading men to death.

At great risk to himself, the young King rode out to meet them. He told them that he was their true leader, and promised to right their wrongs. Many of them went home again trusting to the promises of the King.

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Tyler and his men stayed in London. In a conversation with the King he grew so rude that he was struck from his horse by the Lord Mayor of London, and killed as he lay on the ground.

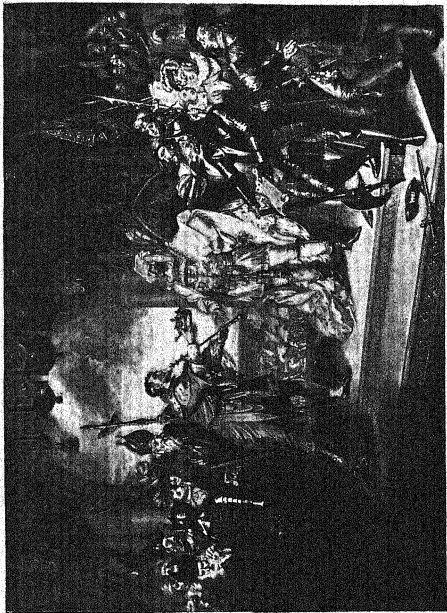
When all danger was over the King forgot his promises. Many of the rebel leaders were put to death, and others were punished in a cruel manner.

Richard II. twice went to Ireland, where during his reign there was great disorder. He took with him on his first visit a large body of archers and men-at-arms, to defend the English in Ireland against the wild tribes of the north and west.

One of the great chiefs of the native Irish was Art McMurrough, who was known and feared all over the land. His men were half naked, and carried only rough darts as weapons; but they were able to strike terror to the hearts of the mail-clad men-at-arms.

The chief, we are told, "rode a horse without a saddle, which was so fine and good that it cost him four hundred cows. In coming down a hill it ran so hard that never hare, deer, sheep, nor any other animal, ran with such speed. In his right hand the chief carried a great dart, which he threw with much skill."

He came to see the King at Waterford, with promises that his people should obey their lord,



RICHARD II. GIVING UP HIS CROWN TO HIS COUSIN HENRY.

(From a print after M. Brown.)

Richard II., and he was thereupon made a knight. But as soon as the King was gone he rose again, and at the head of his men fought a battle with the Prince whom Richard had left to rule Ireland, and killed him.

The King came again, full of anger, leading a large army. But the Irish chief was wily, and would not be drawn into a battle. And before Ireland could be settled King Richard had to go back to England, for a reason which we are now to learn.

Richard II. did not make a good King. As soon as he became his own master he caused one of his uncles to be put to death. He tried to rule the land without the help of Parliament, and he wished to take money from his people by unlawful means. But his plans were spoiled, and at last he lost his crown entirely.

On the death of one of his uncles, known as John of Gaunt, who was Duke of Lancaster, Richard took his lands for himself. But the son of the dead Duke, known as Henry Bolingbroke, who was then abroad, got his friends together and landed in Yorkshire.

Thousands who were tired of Richard's bad rule flocked to the banner of his cousin.

The King was left without friends, and before long fell into Henry's hands. Parliament met, and

said that Richard had broken the laws of England and was unfit to govern the land; and the King was forced to give up his crown.

Then Bolingbroke claimed it, and was chosen King as Henry IV. Shakespeare describes the scene in one of his plays, and puts the following words into the mouth of Richard:

“I give this heavy weight from off my head,
 And this unwieldy sceptre from my hand,
 The pride of kingly sway from out my heart;
 With mine own tears I wash away my balm,
 With mine own hands I give away my crown,
 With mine own tongue deny my sacred state,
 With mine own breath release all duty's rites:

* * * * *

Long mayst thou live in Richard's seat to sit,
 And soon lie Richard in an earthly pit!
 God save King Harry, unking'd Richard says,
 And send him many years of sunshine days!”

Shortly afterwards Richard died in prison, and it was generally thought that he had been murdered.

When Henry IV. had been a few years on the English throne, the heir to the crown of Scotland, Prince James, fell into his hands. It happened in this way:

The young Prince when fourteen years of age was sent to France to finish his education. When

his ship was off Flamborough Head it was stopped by an English vessel, which carried off the Prince to London. There he was placed in the Tower as a prisoner. When his friends objected, King Henry said that he knew French very well, and that the young Prince's studies should be looked after.

For eighteen years the Prince was kept in captivity, but things were made as pleasant as possible for him. He had books in plenty as well as very clever teachers, and he made good use of his time.

One morning he saw from his window in Windsor Castle a beautiful young lady walking in the garden below. He was so much struck with her grace and beauty that he afterwards wrote a poem, called the "King's Quair" (*i.e.*, the King's Book), in which he describes her and his feelings at the time; and when he was set free to go back to his home, he took this young lady, who was the daughter of an English Earl, with him as his Queen.

He came to his kingdom to find it in great disorder, and he set to work to make peace in the land. He was very stern with those who opposed him, and many of his enemies were put to death. But no one was punished unless the Scottish Parliament agreed. And the King's rule was

“that justice should be dealt out to the rich as to the poor without fraud or favour.”

But the Scottish King in his efforts to rule his kingdom well made many foes among the nobles, and a plot was formed to put him to death.

He was holding his Christmas at Perth in a monastery, when he was warned that some of his nobles meant to have his life. He took no notice of the warning.

One night the King was standing in his room talking to the Queen, when he heard the noise of armed men in the court without. The Queen and her ladies rushed to bar the door, but found that the bolts had been taken away. Then one of the ladies, named Catherine Douglas, placed her arm in the staple, and so made it serve the purpose of a bolt.

The King seized the tongs, and, tearing up a flagstone in the floor, leapt down into the vault below the room. But soon the men outside forced open the door, and broke the poor lady's arm in doing so. They saw that the stone had been removed, and guessed where the King had gone. In a few minutes all was over, and Scotland had lost one of the best of her Kings.

CHAPTER XX.—HARRY HOTSPUR AND PRINCE HARRY.

HENRY IV. had won the throne of England from his cousin Richard, but he did not enjoy it greatly. He had many troubles. Some of the nobles who had helped him to become King afterwards grew jealous of him, and rebelled, and he had hard work to put them down.

There was living in the North Country a nobleman of the house of Percy, who was known as Harry Hotspur. He was very brave and warlike, and had fought against the Scots on the Border in the Battle of Otterburn, about thirty-two miles from Newcastle.

There he met the brave and famous soldier, the Earl of Douglas, and a stern fight took place by moonlight. Douglas, armed with an iron mace, rushed into the thickest of the battle, and laid about him stoutly.

But before his men could come to support him he lay stretched on the ground with three mortal wounds. "I die like my forefathers," he said to a friend who stood over him defending him single-handed with a spear, "in a field of battle, and not on a bed of sickness. Conceal my death, defend my banner, and avenge my fall. It is an

old saying that a dead man shall gain a field, and I trust it will come true again."

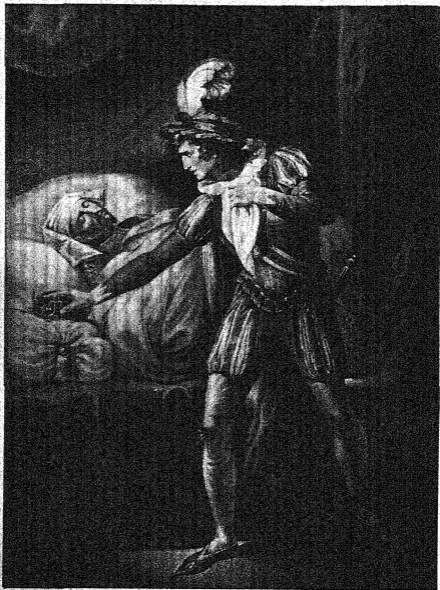
With these words his spirit fled, and the fight went on as fiercely as ever over his body. When morning dawned, the English drew back, for Hotspur was a prisoner in the hands of the Scots. As the old poem says :

"This deed was done at Otterburn
About the breaking of the day ;
Earl Douglas was buried in the bracken bush,
And the Percy led captive away."

At a later date Hotspur joined with the Scots and the Welsh against Henry IV. of England. The Welsh were under Owen Glendower, who hoped to win for himself the whole of Wales. Hotspur met him in North Wales, and marched with him to Shrewsbury. There the King's army faced the rebels, and a stout fight was fought in which Percy was slain.

In his story of the battle, Shakespeare tells how Prince Henry, the King's eldest son, meets with Hotspur, and the two fight until the latter falls with a mortal wound ; and the Prince mourns for the death of a brave and generous enemy.

The King's son was known as Madcap Prince Hal, and many stories are told of his wild pranks in his youth. At one time it is said some of his friends were taken before one of his father's



PRINCE HARRY TAKING THE CROWN.

(From a print after J. Boydell.)



PRINCE HARRY RESTORING THE CROWN.

(From a print after J. Boydell.)

judges, charged with robbery. And when the judge spoke against them, the Prince struck him in the face.

For this the Prince was ordered off to prison. The King heard of it, and said he was glad to know that he had a judge who was not afraid to do his duty.

The King was much vexed and grieved at his son's wild ways. He feared that when he was dead the Prince would make a very poor King and would bring great trouble upon his realm of England.

One day when he was sick, he lay thinking over these things, when word was brought to him that some of the rebel lords had been defeated. At another time this news would have been good to the ears of the King; but he was weary of his life and worn with anxiety.

He lay back on his bed, and asked that there should be no sound made unless it were that of soothing music. And he begged his attendants to place his crown on his pillow.

The musicians played softly in a room not far away, and the eyes of the King closed as if in slumber. Then Prince Henry came noisily in, eager to tell the news of the fight; but one of his father's attendants cried out: "Prince, I beg you to speak low; your father wishes to sleep."

The others then went away, and Harry sat down to watch alone by his father's bedside. Soon his eyes fell upon the crown which rested on the pillow, and he wondered why it should be laid in such an unusual place.

Stretching out his hand, he touched it. Then he took it up and laid it down again. Looking closely at his father, he began to think that he was dead, and, dropping on his knees, he cried, "My gracious lord! My father!"

But the figure on the bed did not stir. Prince Henry stood up, and took the crown from its resting-place. Raising it with both hands above his head, he said: "Here on my head I place this crown, which God shall guard, and which the whole world shall not force from me."

Then he left the room. But in a few moments the King's eyes opened, and in a feeble voice he called for his attendant. "Where is the crown?" he cried. "We left the Prince of Wales with your Highness," said they. "The Prince of Wales!" cried Henry. "Go, fetch him. Is he so hasty to think me dead?"

Soon the Prince was brought back, amazed, but joyful, to find his father alive. Then the two, once more left alone, engaged in earnest talk, the father giving the son good advice, and the son promising to profit by it.

After a short time the King died, and Prince Henry came to the throne. He showed himself to be a good and upright King, and was dearly loved by his people.

CHAPTER XXI.—KING HARRY OF ENGLAND.

HENRY V. reigned only nine years, and much of his short reign was spent in his war with France. The French people at this time were in great trouble. Their King was mad, and the great nobles of the land were continually fighting against each other.

Englishmen thought they had now a good chance of making up for the losses they had lately suffered at the hands of the French. And Henry seems honestly to have believed that it was right for him to try and conquer France, so that he might perhaps restore peace and order in the land.

So he laid claim to the crown of France, though he had not the smallest right to it; and he crossed over to Normandy with an army, to the great delight of his people.

After a siege of five weeks he took the town of Harfleur, but only after the loss of a large part

of his force by sickness. Then with the small remnant of his army he made a daring march on Calais. But between him and the town lay a great French army nearly eight times as strong as his own.

This, however, did not daunt the brave King, though his men were not only few in numbers, but were weak for lack of food. He made up his mind to attack the great French force; and when, on the night before the battle, one of his knights wished for some of the stout soldiers at that time safe at home in England, the King replied:

“I would not have a single man more. If God give us the victory, it will be plain that we owe it to His grace. If not, the fewer we are, the less loss for England.”

On the following morning Henry drew up his force and made ready for the first attack. Let us read the story of the battle in the words of an English poet who lived a long time ago:

And ready to be gone,
Armour on armour shone,
Drum unto drum did groan,
 To hear was wonder;
That with the cries they make
The very earth did shake;
Trumpet to trumpet spake,
 Thunder to thunder.

Well it thine age became,
O noble Erpingham !
That didst the signal frame
 Unto the forces ;
When from a meadow by,
Like a storm, suddenly
The English archery
 Stuck the French horses.

The Spanish yew so strong,
Arrows a cloth-yard long,
That like to serpents stung,
 Piercing the weather :
None from his death now starts,
But playing manly parts,
And like true English hearts,
 Stuck close together.

When down their bows they threw,
And forth their bilbows drew,
And on the French they flew,
 No man was tardy.
Arms from the shoulders sent,
Scalps to the teeth were rent ;
Down the French peasants went,
 These men were hardy.

When now that noble king,
His broad sword brandishing,
Into the host did fling,
 As to o'erwhelm it ;



KING HENRY THE FIFTH.

Who many a deep wound lent,
His arms with blood besprent,
And many a cruel dent
Bruisèd his helmet.

The helmet with the dint made by the battle-axe can still be seen hanging over Henry's tomb in Westminster Abbey.

When the fight was over, eleven thousand Frenchmen lay dead on the field, and amongst them were nearly all the chief nobles of France. It was one of the most famous victories ever gained by an English army.

Two years after the Battle of Agincourt Henry V. went to France again, and overran Normandy. Then the French were forced to make peace with him; and it was agreed that he should marry the daughter of the French King, be Regent for his mad father-in-law while he lived, and be King of France when he died.

Shakespeare tells in an amusing way how Henry made known to Catherine, the French Princess, that he wished to marry her. She could only speak a few words of English, and Henry did not know much French, so that it was not easy for any conversation to take place.

The Princess asks if it is possible that she should love the enemy of France, and King Henry answers:

“No, it is not possible that you should love the *enemy* of France, Kate: but in loving me you should love the *friend* of France; for I love France so well that I will not part with a village of it; I will have it all mine: and, Kate, when France is mine and I am yours, then yours is France and you are mine.”

CHAPTER XXII.—THE WARS OF THE ROSES.

As we have seen, Henry V. was to become King of France on the death of his wife's father. As it happened, however, Henry died first, when he was only thirty-four. He left a baby son, who became King of England, and soon afterwards, when his grandfather died, King of France as well.

In England he was known as King Henry VI. But only the people of the North of France took him for their King; the South was faithful to Charles the Dauphin, the son of the mad King.

While Henry was a child, his uncle, the Duke of Bedford, ruled France for him, and the English went on winning many victories. At last they laid siege to the city of Orleans, in the central part of France. They felt certain of being able to take it, for the French had now lost heart completely.

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Then Orleans was saved in a wonderful way. In a distant part of France lived a village girl named Jeanne, whom the English afterwards called Joan of Arc. When she was about thirteen, she was one day in her father's garden, when she thought she heard a voice from heaven saying to her :

“Joan, be a good child, for the King of Heaven hath chosen thee to save France.”

Afterwards she often seemed to hear voices bidding her not to rest until Orleans was saved from the English and Charles was crowned at Rheims, as nearly all the French Kings had been before him.

Before long, in spite of the advice of her friends, she made her way to the place where Charles was staying. She was given a suit of armour, and placed at the head of a company, with which she attacked the English and saved Orleans.

Then she persuaded Charles to go to Rheims, and had the great joy of seeing him crowned as King. She took part in other fights, but at last fell into the hands of the English, who said she was a witch, and put her to death by burning.

After her death the English gradually lost all their lands in France, and at last only the town of Calais remained in their hands. The King, Henry VI., was quite unlike his brave father, the

victor of Agincourt. He was gentle and pious, but very weak-minded, and sometimes became quite mad for months at a time. The people hated his Queen, Margaret of Anjou, who was a very masterful woman ; and they hated the King's ministers, because they thought it was their fault that the English had been beaten in France.

There was also much disorder in the country. The great lords had frequent quarrels among themselves, and they also did many cruel things to the people. Henry VI. was quite unable to keep them in order.

Then there was formed a party of noblemen who said that Henry had no real right to the throne because his grandfather, Henry IV., had been what is called a usurper ; and that Richard, Duke of York, a powerful noble, had the best right to the crown.

Other nobles took the part of King Henry, and soon there were two parties in the country. The King's friends formed the Lancastrian party, because Henry's grandfather, as you may remember, was Duke of Lancaster. The other was known as the Yorkist party.

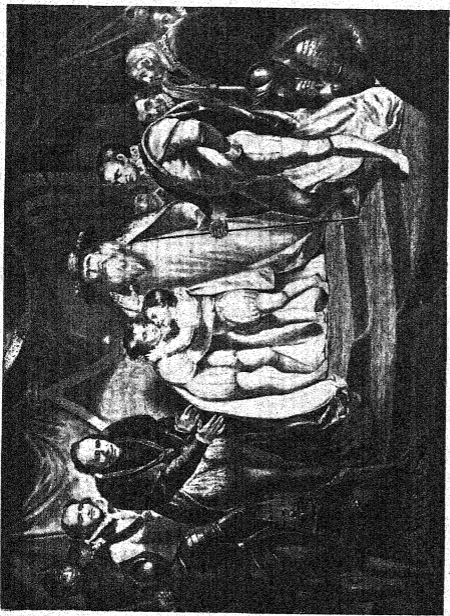
Before long they began to fight. The badge of the Yorkists was a white rose, that of the Lancastrians a red rose. And the long struggle between them came to be known as the Wars of the Roses.

After some fighting King Henry fell into the hands of the Duke of York. The poor weak-minded King was quite puzzled at the way things had turned out. "My father was King," he said in a dazed way, "his father also was King; I myself have worn the crown forty years from my cradle; you have all sworn to obey me as your King. How, then, can anyone dispute my right?"

But, as he always did as he was told, he agreed that he should wear the crown as long as he lived, and that after his death the Duke of York should succeed him instead of his little son, Prince Edward.

Queen Margaret was furious that her son should be thus set aside. She gathered her forces, and won a great victory over the Yorkists near Wakefield in Yorkshire. The Duke of York was killed in the fight. Margaret stuck up his head, with a paper crown upon it, on the gates of York. The dead Duke's second son, a boy of seventeen, who was in the fight, fell on his knees before a Lancastrian lord, crying for mercy. "As your father killed mine, I will kill you," cried the savage noble as he plunged his dagger into the poor boy's heart.

York's eldest son, Edward, soon had his revenge. He defeated his enemies in the awful Battle of



RICHARD, DUKE OF YORK, AND THE LITTLE PRINCES.
(From a print after J. Northcote, R.A.)

Towton in Yorkshire. It lasted two days, and was fought in a March snowstorm. Henry and Margaret escaped to Scotland. The Yorkist leader marched to London, and was crowned King as Edward IV.

After several years of wandering, Henry was captured and put into the Tower, and his wife and son made their way to France. But in time the Queen and her son came back again, and the fighting began once more. The Queen's forces were beaten, her son met with a cruel death, and shortly afterwards King Henry died in the Tower.

CHAPTER XXIII.—THE BATTLE OF BOSWORTH.

WHEN Edward IV. died, his son, a boy of twelve years, became King as Edward V. The new King had an uncle, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, who was called Richard Crookback, because one of his shoulders was higher than the other. Richard was a clever man and a good soldier, though perfectly merciless to anyone who stood in his way.

Every child has heard how Richard got the little King and his younger brother into his hands, and put them into the Tower; how he

got Parliament to set the boy-King aside, and make him King as Richard III. ; how the little boys disappeared, and the story got about that they had been smothered in their sleep by their uncle's orders ; and how two hundred years later two little skeletons were found buried at the foot of a staircase in the Tower.

Richard did not keep the crown long. There was in France at that time a nobleman who belonged to the House of Lancaster, and was also of Welsh birth. His name was Henry Tudor, and he was Earl of Richmond. Knowing how Richard was hated, this nobleman made up his mind to get the crown from him.

So he landed in Wales, where his friends quickly gathered round him. With a small army he marched into England, and met Richard at Bosworth, near Leicester. During the fight that followed, a powerful friend of the King deserted and went over to the side of Henry.

Richard, seeing that all was lost, plunged into the midst of his foes, and died fighting manfully. His battered crown was found in a hawthorn bush and placed on Henry's head.

In due time the victor was crowned as Henry VII. He married Elizabeth of York, and in this way the two great houses which had fought so long for the crown were united.

We have already said that Henry was a Welshman, and that among those who helped him to win the crown were his Welsh friends. Thus it happened that a Welsh noble became King of both England and Wales.

Henry VII. also did something to bind Scotland and England more closely together. He married his daughter Margaret Tudor to the Scottish King James IV. There were still to be fights between Scots and English, as we shall see; but the two countries were slowly but surely learning that it would be better for both to live in peace together.

Exactly one hundred years after this marriage the great-grandson of Margaret Tudor, who was King of Scotland, became also King of England. But we shall learn more of him in a later chapter.

King Henry also tried to draw Ireland and England more closely together.

When Richard II. left Ireland, Art McMurrough became the leading chief among the Irish (see Chapter XIX.), and for many years the land was given over to disorder and strife. Tribe fought against tribe, and English fought against Irish.

In the reign of Henry VII. there came to Ireland a youth of fifteen, named Lambert Simnel, who said that he was a Prince, and ought to have by right the crown of England.

He found many friends ready to fight for him, and he was taken to Dublin and crowned with a crown taken from a statue in a church. Then he was hoisted upon the shoulders of the tallest man in Ireland, and taken through the streets of Dublin to be shown to the people as their King.

A little later he crossed with his friends to Lancashire, and a battle was fought with the King's forces at Stoke. The rebels were defeated, and Lambert Simnel fell into the hands of the King.

Henry was so little afraid of him that he spared his life; and to show how he despised the so-called Prince, he made him a servant in the royal kitchen. Afterwards the youth who had hoped to be a King was made a falconer, and he had the care of the King's hawks until he died.

CHAPTER XXIV.—CARDINAL WOLSEY.

NOT many people were sorry when Henry VII. died. He had been hard and grasping, taking all the pains he could to get together a large fortune. He had a Minister, Archbishop Morton, who was very clever in getting money for him.

If a man had a fine house and kept a great many servants, he would say: "You must be very rich, so you can well afford to give the King a

large present of money." To another man who lived quietly in a small house he would say: "You are so careful that you must have saved a great deal, so you ought to be able to give the King a handsome sum of money."

The people were delighted with the new King, Henry VIII. They called him "bluff King Hal," because he had a friendly word and a joke for everyone. He was handsome and active, and was as fond of spending money as his father had been of saving it.

Afterwards people found that this pleasant King could be very cruel. He had always to have his own way, and he was so clever that he knew exactly how to get it.

He took for his wife a Spanish Princess named Katharine, the widow of his elder brother Arthur, who had died before his father. The Queen was older than her husband, and very grave and quiet; but for a long time they were very happy together.

During the early years of his reign Henry had a very faithful servant, whose one thought was to make his master as powerful as he could. This was Thomas Wolsey.

He was the son of a citizen of Ipswich, and was very clever as a boy. In time he became a priest, and was taken into the King's service, for at that



CARDINAL WOLSEY AT THE GATE OF LEICESTER ABBEY.

(From a print in the Bodleian Collection.)

time Kings nearly always used clergymen to do the work of governing under them.

Very soon King Henry found out what a clever man Wolsey was. The work he did best was to manage England's dealings with other countries. At this time England was not very powerful among the nations. No English King since Henry V. had won glory abroad. Henry VIII. longed to alter this.

Wolsey did it for him. France and Spain were at that time the most powerful countries, and they were always fighting. France had a young King, Francis, and Spain had a young King, Charles, who was also ruler of other lands as well.

Wolsey did not wish to see either of these two Kings become too powerful. He got Henry to take the side of the King who happened for the time to be the weaker. Each was, of course, glad to get the help of Henry, and in this way England became of importance again abroad.

As long as Wolsey could make his master powerful he cared for little else, and he made many enemies. He was hated by the nobles. They looked down upon him with scorn because his father had been a tradesman, and they were jealous of his favour with the King.

Wolsey was the King's chief Minister. He was at the same time Bishop of Winchester and Arch-

bishop of York, and the Pope also made him a Cardinal. Wolsey himself hoped one day to be Pope, but he did not get his desire.

He lived in great state, and was thought very proud. He built a splendid palace, called Hampton Court, by the banks of the Thames; and when it was finished he made a present of it to the King.

Suddenly Wolsey lost the favour of the King. Henry began to wonder whether he had done right in marrying his brother's widow. The real truth was that he was tired of the Queen, and he wished to put her away in order to marry a young lady named Anne Boleyn.

He told Wolsey that he must arrange this for him. Wolsey does not appear to have liked the work; but he always thought it his duty to please his master, whatever he wished him to do.

The Pope ordered Wolsey and another Cardinal to hold a Court in England to hear what Henry and Katharine had to say. But the Queen said that she would have no judge but the Pope himself, and it was decided to try the case in the Pope's own city of Rome.

Henry thought it was Wolsey's fault that the matter was not settled at once, and was very angry with him. He took away his offices and his wealth, and treated him most unkindly. Wolsey left the Court in disgrace. Before long

Henry ordered him to come back to London to be tried for treason.

Wolsey was broken-hearted at the King's cruelty. He was old and in weak health. On his journey back to Court he reached Leicester Abbey. The Abbot came out to meet him, and stood on the threshold with his hands stretched out in pitying welcome.

"Father Abbot," said the Cardinal, "I am come hither to lay my bones among you." A day or two later he lay upon his death-bed. In his last moments he thought with sorrow of his past life. "If I had served God," he said, "as well as I have served the King, He would not have given me over in my old age to my enemies."

After his death the King's Minister was a man named Thomas Cromwell. While he was in power many of the monasteries were done away with. The King said that they ought to be closed because the monks and nuns had become so wicked.

This may have been true of some of them, but others were good and pious, and very kind to the poor. Many people were very angry at the closing of the monasteries, and in the North of England there was a rebellion. But it was put down, and the leaders were treated very harshly.

Henry VIII. did at length put aside his wife,



and married Anne Boleyn. After a time the new Queen lost his favour, and she was beheaded. The King married again four times, so that he had in all six wives. The third of the six had a son, who became King after his father's death, with the title of Edward VI.

CHAPTER XXV.—THE BATTLE OF
FLODDEN.

WE shall give the story of the Battle of Flodden in almost the same words as those used by Sir Walter Scott,* the great novelist, whose works you will all enjoy some day.

James IV. of Scotland made up his mind, against the wishes of his lords, to invade England while Henry VIII. was in France. The Earl of Surrey marched to meet him with a large army.

The Scottish Earls begged their King to withdraw from the army for his own safety. But James, who wished to gain fame from his military skill, told them that they should not put such a disgrace upon him.

“I will fight with the English,” he said, “though you had all sworn the contrary. You may shame yourselves by flight, but you shall not shame me.”

The Scottish army had fixed their camp on a hill called Flodden, in the north of Northumberland. This hill slopes steeply towards the plain; and there is a piece of level ground on the top

* Freely adapted from the *Tales of a Grandfather*.



THE CROWNING OF JAMES III. OF SCOTLAND, THE FATHER OF THE
KING WHO FOUGHT AT FLODDEN.

(From the painting by Vandergoes.)

where the Scots might have drawn up their army at great advantage.

Surrey sent a herald to invite James to come down from the height and join battle in the open plain. The Scottish King refused to receive the messenger, and said it was not such a message as an Earl might send to a King.

Surrey therefore marched northward, sweeping round the hill of Flodden; and, crossing the Till, he placed himself with his whole army between James and his own kingdom.

The King allowed him to do this without making any movement. But when he saw the English army lying between him and the way back to his own country he became alarmed. So he resolved to give the signal for the fatal battle.

Then the Scots set fire to their huts and the other refuse and litter of their camp. The smoke spread along the side of the hill, and under its cover the army of King James came down from the hill. The English came on to meet them, both armies being hidden from each other by the smoke. Each force was divided into four columns.

The battle began at the hour of four in the afternoon. The first body to begin the fighting was the left wing of the Scots, under Huntly and Home, which threw into disorder the right wing of the English under Howard.

The English leader was beaten down, his standard taken, and he himself was in danger of instant death, when he was saved by a band of outlaws.

On the right of James's army a division of Highlanders were so much annoyed by the English arrows that they broke their ranks and rushed down the hill. At once they were attacked by an English column, and routed with great loss of life.

The division under King James contained the best and bravest of his nobles and gentry. Their armour was so good that the English arrows did little harm among them. They were all on foot; even the King had parted with his horse.

Opposed to them was Surrey's own division. The Scots came on with great fury, and for a time had the better. Surrey's men were thrown into great disorder, and his standard was in danger of capture. The English seemed to be in some risk of losing the battle.

But the force which under Stanley had routed the Highlanders came against James on the one side, while another English column took him on the other.

The Scots showed the greatest courage. They formed into a circle with their spears extended on every side, and fought like heroes.

Bows being now useless, the English came in on all sides with their bills. But they could not force the Scots either to break or to retire.

James himself died fighting to the last. He was twice wounded with arrows, and had his death-blow from a bill. Night fell before the battle was decided, for still the Scottish centre kept their ground. But during the night the rest of the Scottish army drew off in silent despair from the field on which they had left their brave King and the flower of his nobility.

After the battle the infant son of the dead King was crowned at Scone as James V. When he grew up, Henry VIII. wished him to marry his daughter Mary, who afterwards became Queen of England. But this match was not brought about. The Scottish King married a lady of France, and had a daughter, of whom we shall read later as Mary, Queen of Scots.

CHAPTER XXVI.—THE BOY KING OF ENGLAND.

HENRY VIII. left three children: a son named Edward, and two daughters, Mary and Elizabeth. Each of these in turn came to the throne.

But not one of them left any children, and when they had all died the crown of England came to a King of Scotland; so the two kingdoms were at last joined under one King. But of this we shall learn more in a later chapter.

Edward VI. was only a boy of ten years when he became King, and he died at the early age of sixteen. He was very grave and thoughtful, and he cared much more about the way in which the country was governed than most boys of his age would have done.

In his time there were in the land many unhappy quarrels between people who could not agree about the way in which they should worship God. There were two great parties—the Roman Catholics and the Protestants—and a continual struggle went on between them.

They even went so far as to put one another to death when they were able to do so; and the method chosen was the fearful death by burning. They had not yet learnt the lesson that people can worship God in many different ways.

Edward VI. was a Protestant. He was very sickly and he knew that he had not long to live. It grieved him very much to think that after his death the crown would go to his half-sister Mary, who was a Roman Catholic.

So he let some artful men persuade him to say that his cousin, Lady Jane Grey, should be Queen when he died. Lady Jane was a beautiful girl of sixteen, very learned, very good, and a Protestant.

When the boy King died, however, the people were true to their lawful Queen, Mary. Queen Jane only reigned nine days, and then was sent to the Tower.

Queen Mary spared her at first, but a year later there was a rising against the Queen ; and though Lady Jane had no share in it, her head was cut off as well as that of her young husband.

The reign of Queen Mary was an unhappy time. Large numbers of Protestants were put to death by burning, and among them were some of the highest people in the land. This dreadful work went on for three years ; and it is said that nearly three hundred people were put to death in this horrible manner.

The Queen married Philip, the King of Spain, who was also a Roman Catholic ; but he did not love his wife, and poor Queen Mary was very miserable and lonely, for she had no children to comfort her. During her reign Calais was lost to the English in a war with France, and the Queen took this loss very much to heart.

At last she died, and few people were sorry

when they heard the news. The Princess Elizabeth, who was a Protestant, now came to the throne; and her coming was hailed with joy by almost the whole of the nation.

CHAPTER XXVII.—MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS.

QUEEN ELIZABETH was one of the wisest and greatest rulers that England has ever had. She had many faults. She was vain, self-willed, and greedy. Yet she made her people love her well. All the wisest and bravest of her people worked hard for her, and were ready to die for her and for their country.

She was wise and brave, and, as we shall see, she brought her country through many great dangers. In her reign England was a more peaceful and wealthy country than it had ever been before.

The Scots had also at this time a young Queen, Mary Stuart, of whom we have already spoken. Mary was more beautiful than Elizabeth, but not so wise and prudent. The two Queens were cousins, as we have seen.

Many of the Scottish people did not like their beautiful young Queen, who was a Roman Catholic. Scotland had now become a Protestant country, chiefly owing to the teaching of a great

preacher named John Knox. Knox hated Roman Catholics, and he was very earnest and serious; he thought that everything that was merry and amusing was wrong.

Mary had been Queen of Scotland ever since she was ten days old. But she had lived in France nearly all her life. She had been sent there for safety when the English went to war with the Scots because they would not agree to give their baby Queen as wife to King Edward VI. The mother of Mary, too, was a French woman, as you will remember; and the French wished in time to marry the young Queen of Scots to the Prince who would one day become King of France.

The young Queen was educated in France, and learned at the Court to love music, dancing, fine clothes, and a gay life. In time she married the French Prince, and when he came to the throne the Queen of Scots became also Queen of France. But she was left a widow when she was only nineteen, and had to go back to her own kingdom of Scotland.

Many of the grave Scottish people were shocked at Mary's gay doings; and on her part the Queen found Scotland somewhat dull and dreary. Before long she married a young nobleman, named Darnley, and they had one little son, James.

The Queen was full of high spirits, very brave



MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS, AT THE BATTLE OF LANGSIDE.
(The dying warrior is Douglas, one of the Queen's most faithful supporters.)

and daring. She loved adventure and the sound of arms. One of her friends once heard her say that she wished she were a man, "to know what life it was to lie all night in the fields."

Mary soon grew tired of Darnley, who, indeed, treated her very badly. Yet when he fell ill she was very kind to him, and persuaded him to come to Edinburgh to be near her. But he was to stay for a while in a lonely house outside the city until he was quite cured.

One night, soon after Darnley went there, this house was blown up with gunpowder, and Darnley's dead body was found lying in the orchard. The deed was believed to have been done by a nobleman named Bothwell who wished to marry the Queen of Scots.

Very soon after this Mary married Bothwell. Then people began to say that she had known beforehand that Darnley was to be murdered, and had asked him to come to Edinburgh on purpose. Whether Mary really did this horrible thing or not will, most likely, never be certainly known. But at the time many people thought that she was guilty.

They made her a prisoner, and there were some people who wished her to be put to death as a murderess. Instead of that, however, they made her give up her crown to her little son; and they

shut her up in a castle on an island in Loch Leven. Here they thought she would be quite secure.

But she had many friends in the country, and they made a plot to set her free. One of her attendants, a young page, stole the keys and helped her to escape with her women. A boat was waiting, and the party got safely away. Very soon the Queen was at the head of an army.

The Earl of Murray, the nobleman who was ruling Scotland for the infant King, marched against her, and defeated her army at the Battle of Langside. Mary escaped to the Solway, which she crossed in a light boat, and before night came she was safe in the Castle of Carlisle, and, of course, upon English ground.

Elizabeth did not know what to do with her. Mary asked for help to win back her crown, but Elizabeth would not grant this. Then she asked for a safe passage to France or Spain. This, too, the English Queen would not give; she feared that Mary would get the help of one or other of these countries to win the crown of England. For there were many Roman Catholics who wished to see Mary in the place of Elizabeth.

At last the English Queen made up her mind that the best plan would be to keep Mary as a prisoner in England. "If you do so," said the

Scottish Queen, "you will have not a little trouble." These words came true indeed.

For nineteen years Mary was kept in prison, first in one English castle and then in another. She was treated well and with respect. But her high spirit chafed under the restraint. She could only pass the time by doing needlework and playing with her dogs and birds, which was, of course, a very dull life after all her adventures.

Over and over again plots were made by her friends to set her free; and it was proposed to kill Elizabeth, and make her cousin Queen of England. All these plots gave great trouble to the English people, and it began to be said that the land would have no peace while Mary Stuart was alive.

After a time Elizabeth's Ministers came to her and said that a letter had come into their hands which Mary had written to a friend to tell him that she was glad to hear of the plot to murder the Queen. They now said that Mary must be put to death for the safety of Elizabeth, and, indeed, of England.

For a long time Elizabeth could not make up her mind to sign the paper ordering this to be done. She would have liked her Ministers to do it on their own account, so that she might not be blamed; but they were too wise for that. They

thought that when it was done the Queen would turn round and punish them, though in her heart she would be glad.

At last, however, she did sign the paper. Then two gentlemen went off to Fotheringay Castle to tell Mary that she must prepare for her death on the following day.

Mary did not show the least fear. She spent the night in prayer and in writing farewell letters to her friends. Early next morning she was taken into the great hall of the castle, and was there beheaded.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—THE GREAT ARMADA.

IN the reign of our Henry VII., the grandfather of Queen Elizabeth, the great sailor Christopher Columbus sailed from Spain, across the Atlantic Ocean, and discovered America. After him many Spanish captains set out on the journey across the western ocean, and before long the Spaniards owned some of the richest parts of America. They found great wealth in that land, and sent home many ships laden with silver and other things of great value.

In the time of Elizabeth Englishmen began to feel very unwilling to let the Spaniards keep all these good things for themselves. Some Devon-

shire gentlemen began to fit out small ships at their own cost, and to sail westward to seek their fortunes.

The favourite plan of these sailors was to lie in wait for the Spanish treasure-ships as they were coming home laden with silver and other precious things; then they fought the Spanish crews, and, if they could, carried off the treasure.

This was nothing else but robbery, for the two countries were not at war. But many of the English hated the Spanish King, Philip, because he was such an enemy to all Protestants; and they felt careless as to what he thought of them.

So every year they grew more daring, and some of them became rich from the spoils they took. When the Spanish King complained to Queen Elizabeth, she took very little notice; for, as a rule, she had a large share of the spoil which the English sailors brought home.

The most famous of all these English sailors was Francis Drake. He sailed several times to the Spanish Main, and he was the first Englishman to make a voyage round the world. Like the rest, he took all he could from the Spanish ships which he met on his voyages.

One day a large Spanish vessel was riding at anchor in a harbour on the west coast of America, when the man on the look-out saw a small ship

come sailing in. He felt sure it was a Spanish vessel; for he never dreamed of Englishmen coming so far from home. So they ran up their flags, beat their drums, and got ready a feast for their countrymen.

The little vessel came up alongside. Then, without a word of warning, the English sailors boarded the Spanish ship and set upon the crew. The Spaniards were quite taken by surprise and soon beaten, and their ship seized.

Drake found rich treasure on board, and this was soon stowed away in the hold of his own ship, which was called the *Pelican*. Then he sailed away. At the next port he found silver bars piled up on the pier, and a few labourers lying asleep by them. Drake did not hurt the men, for he had no wish to be cruel, but he took the silver. Just as he was stowing away the last bars in his ship, there came down from the mountains a number of llamas with another load of silver; and that, too, went into the hold of the *Pelican*.

When Drake got home from his voyage round the world, his countrymen were very proud of him. Elizabeth made him a knight and treated him with great favour. But the King of Spain, as we might expect, made many bitter and angry complaints against him through a Spanish

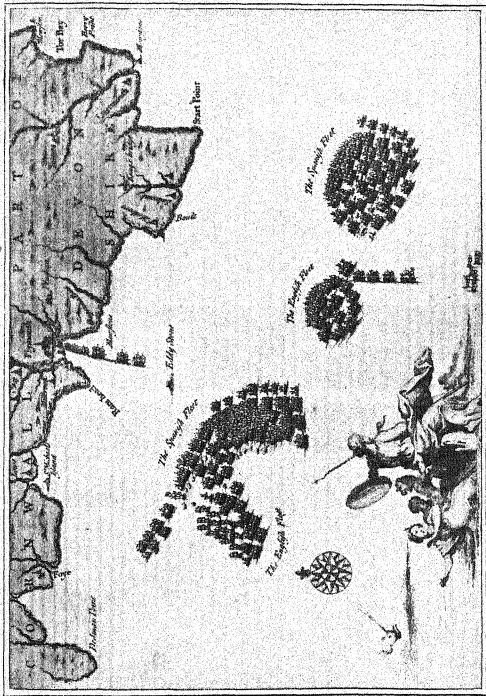
nobleman who stayed at the English Court. This nobleman wrote to his master, King Philip, an account of what had passed between him and the Queen of England :

“ ‘ Your Majesty,’ I said, ‘ will not hear words, so we must come to the cannon, and see if you will not hear them.’ ”

“ Quietly, in her most natural voice, as if she were telling a common story, she said that if I spoke in that way she would fling me into a dungeon.”

At last Philip of Spain made up his mind to send a great fleet of warships to England, and to land an army to take London. But when the Spanish fleet was almost ready to set sail, Drake sailed into the harbour where it lay, and burnt the store-ships. This he called “ singeing the King of Spain’s beard ” ; and the daring deed was the means of putting off for a year the starting of the huge fleet, which was known as the Invincible Armada.

In the summer of 1588 the great fleet set sail, and as soon as it was known to be coming, beacon-fires flashed the news from hill to hill and peak to peak through the whole length of England. The Devon sailors were ready, and a fleet of small ships lay in Plymouth Harbour under the High Admiral, Lord Howard.



AN OLD MAP SHOWING THE SPANISH AND ENGLISH FLEETS AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE CHANNEL.

The Spanish vessels were allowed to sail up the Channel. Then the English ships followed them and did a great deal of damage, besides taking one or two of them. The Armada came to anchor off the port of Calais. But Drake sent fire-ships among them and drove them eastward into the North Sea.

Then a great storm arose, and the Spanish ships were driven before it for many days. On they sailed along our east coast, hoping to get round the Orkney Islands out into the open Atlantic. Many of them were wrecked on the way, and only about one-third of the great Armada got home again to Spain.

“With all their great pride and noise,” wrote Drake, “they did not, in their sailing round England, so much as sink or take one ship or cock-boat of ours, or even harm so much as one sheep-cote in the land.”

Elizabeth went in state to St. Paul's Cathedral to thank God for the victory. And she caused a number of medals to be made and to be kept in memory of the great event.

Elizabeth reigned more than fifteen years after the defeat of the Spanish Armada. Her old age was very sad. She was ill a long time, and felt very lonely. She had never been able to make up her mind to marry. And when she died, the

King of Scotland became also King of England. So at last the two kingdoms were joined under one King, never again to be separated.

CHAPTER XXIX.—SHAKESPEARE;
SPENSER; SIDNEY.

THERE were many other famous men living in the days of Queen Elizabeth besides the sailors of whom we have read. Many writers of her time have also won great fame, and three of the best known were William Shakespeare, Edmund Spenser, and Philip Sidney.

William Shakespeare was born at Stratford-on-Avon, in the county of Warwick. His father's house is still standing, and the room in which it is said the poet was born is now shown to visitors.

We do not know much about his schooling or his doings when he was a boy. His father was at one time a leading tradesman of the town; but he lost most of his money, and the boy was taken early from school to help to earn his own living.

What kind of work he took up is not quite certain. One writer says that he became a butcher, and tells how "when he killed a calf he would do it in high style and make a speech."

When Shakespeare was quite young he married

a woman a few years older than himself. After a few years he left his native town and went up to London, where he got work in the theatres.

The theatres of that time were not so fine as those we now have in our towns. There were no painted scenes at the back of the stage, no pretty lights and fine dresses as we have in our day.

If the people in the play were supposed to be living in a forest, a board was hung out, on which was written, "This is a wood." The lookers-on had to picture the scenery in their own minds.

The actors, as a rule, wore their ordinary clothes. There were no actresses, but boys acted the parts of women and girls. The people who went to see the plays sat on little stools out in a courtyard.

But they enjoyed themselves quite as much as playgoers do now. The fact that there was no scenery made them think more of the words that were being spoken. And the plays in Queen Elizabeth's time were some of the noblest that have ever been written.

Shakespeare became an actor in one of these theatres. He also spent a good deal of his time in helping other people to write plays. Then he began to write some himself. After a time he got a theatre of his own. He made some money,

and as soon as he was rich enough he went back to live at Stratford, which he loved better than any other place in the world.

He bought a house in that town, and lived there quietly for a few years. When he died he was buried in the parish church. He is our greatest poet, and one of the first of all the world's great writers. His plays are thirty-seven in number, and they are now known and loved all over the world. Some of them tell tales which are very sad. Others are very amusing. One is all about fairies. And all are written in most beautiful language.

Shakespeare, like all true Englishmen, was very fond of his country. He liked to write about the great deeds that men of England had done in days gone by. So he wrote many plays about things that took place in English history.

They make everything so real that we can in a very pleasant way learn much of our history from these plays of Shakespeare. We have already in this book read some stories from his plays.

Another great poet of the time of Elizabeth was Edmund Spenser, who wrote a long poem called *The Fairy Queen*. It is all about knights and ladies, dwarfs and giants, castles and combats, and some day you will perhaps be able to enjoy it.

The first part tells of a Princess named Una, whose father and mother were kept prisoners in their own castle by a fearful dragon; and how the brave Red Cross Knight, who was known as Saint George, killed the dragon after a fearful fight, and afterwards married the Princess.

When we read of Sir Philip Sidney we get a good idea of what a true gentleman was like in the days of Queen Elizabeth. He was a great lover of poetry, and wrote a little book in praise of it. He also wrote a number of beautiful poems himself.

Sir Philip was as gallant and brave as he was gentle and pure-hearted. He died the death of a soldier on the field of battle.

He went with some of the Queen's troops across the North Sea to fight against Spain in the country we now call Holland. In one of the battles he was struck by a musket-ball in the thigh, and soon it was known that nothing could be done to save his life.

As he lay dying, someone brought him a cup of cold water to quench his burning thirst. As he was about to put it to his lips, he noticed a poor wounded soldier who was lying near looking with eager eyes at the cup. Sidney at once handed it to him untasted. "Thy need is greater than mine," he said with a smile.

Before long he died, and so Elizabeth lost one of the best and bravest of her subjects and helpers.

CHAPTER XXX.—THE YEAR 1603.

QUEEN ELIZABETH died in the year 1603. The last days of the great Queen were very sad. She lay on the floor propped upon pillows, and when one of her Ministers said that she must go to bed, she cried: "Must! Is *must* a word to be used to Princes?"

At last, however, she had to take to her bed. Just before she died, the name of James VI. of Scotland, the son of her old rival Mary Stuart, was mentioned to her. She knew what was meant. He was to be King of England also. Did she approve? She did not speak, but moved her head as if to give her consent. Not long afterwards she passed away.

So the King of Scots became also King of England in the year 1603. He was henceforth to be known as King of Great Britain, and since his time both Scotland and England have had the same Sovereign, and in many ways have formed one country. But we must not forget how it was that the two countries came together at last.

Each of the two kingdoms had a Parliament of its own, which helped the King to govern the land. And for about a hundred years the Parliament in Edinburgh and the Parliament in London were kept quite distinct. Then a change was made, as we shall see in a later chapter.

King James was now not only King of Great Britain, but also of Ireland. And when he came to the throne, for the first time Ireland had really become part of the British dominions, though it was now four hundred years since the Kings of England had begun to call themselves Lords of Ireland.

These had been very unhappy years for Ireland, as we have seen in former chapters of this book; but the most miserable of all were those she had passed through during the reign of Elizabeth.

The real Irish people at that time were still ruled by their native chiefs, and kept quite apart from the English, most of whom lived in and about Dublin. It was only over the English in Ireland that the English King could claim to be Lord. The Irish paid no heed to his laws. There was a Parliament in Dublin, but so far as the Irish chiefs were concerned it might never have been there at all.

Now, Queen Elizabeth wished very much to bring the whole of the island really under her rule. She feared that if she did not the Spaniards

might take it from her. At one time a small body of them did make a landing, and took a fort. But the Queen's officer in Dublin, who was known as the Lord Deputy, marched against the



NOBLEWOMAN AND TRADESMAN'S WIFE ; WITH TWO IRISH
TRIBESMEN FROM THE WEST.

fort, took it, and had all the Spaniards put to death.

Large bodies of English were sent to settle in Ireland, and land was granted to them. This

filled the Irish with great anger, for they had each a share in the land that belonged to their chief. So there was much cruel bloodshed, and the land was filled with strife.

Queen Mary had used this plan of sending English settlers to Ireland. Many of the families she sent over settled in the middle portion of Ireland. The land on which they made their homes was divided into King's County and Queen's County, being so called after Philip of Spain and Mary.

After a while the English rulers seem to have tried to do their best for the Irish people. They gave many of them grants of land, and tried to give peace and order to the unhappy country. But the Irish people did not wish to settle down to live in the English way, and they could not be expected to be thankful for gifts of lands which they looked upon as their own.

In the north-eastern part of Ireland, which is called Ulster, a large number of people from Scotland were given grants of land. They proved to be very hard-working, and made good use of the land on which they made their homes.

They built farms and homesteads, churches and mills, and began to grow wool and breed cattle. Ever since that time Ulster has been one of the richest parts of Ireland.

Though Ireland was now looked upon as a part of the British Isles, it kept its own Parliament, which met in Dublin. This went on for nearly two hundred years, when a change was made, of which we shall read in a later chapter.

CHAPTER XXXI.—SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

ONE of the great men of the time of Elizabeth who lived on into the next reign was Sir Walter Raleigh. The Queen liked him very much. It is said that he first won her favour by laying down his fine cloak over a muddy spot in the road which she had to cross.

But Raleigh was not merely a courtier. He was a brave soldier and a good sailor. He was born in Devon County, and had his share in the work done by Drake in the fight with Spain; and to the end of his life he was one of the bitterest enemies that Spain had in England.

Raleigh was one of the first who tried to make homes for English men and women beyond the seas. He sent out a party of English to settle in the south-eastern part of what is now the United States. His colony failed, but a little later it was set up again, and began to do well. It was called Virginia in honour of the Virgin Queen, Elizabeth.

Virginia became noted for its tobacco. Sir Walter learned to smoke from the Indians; and he was one of the first Englishmen to do so. It is said that when his servant first saw him smoking he thought that his master was on fire, and ran for some water to "put him out."

In Raleigh's time the Spaniards told many stories about a land of gold which they said was to be found in a certain part of South America. In this land they said was the city of Manoa, which was one of the richest in the world.

It stood upon a salt-water lake, and the palace of its King was glorious to behold. "All the vessels of his home, table, and kitchen, were of gold and silver, and the meanest were of silver and copper mixed together.

"He had in his wardrobe hollow statues of gold like to giants, and gold figures of all the beasts, birds, trees, and herbs, that the earth bringeth forth, and of all the fishes that the sea or rivers breedeth.

"He had also ropes, chests, and troughs of gold and silver, and heaps of golden bars like wood marked out to burn. His people had a garden of pleasure where they went to take the air of the sea; here were all kinds of herbs, flowers, and trees, of gold and silver."

Raleigh set out with a band of men to try to

find this wonderful city, which the Spaniards called *El Dorado*—that is, “the Golden.” But he did not find it, though he travelled far into that part of South America now known as Guiana.

Soon after James I. came to the throne Raleigh was accused of having taken part in a plot against the King. He was sentenced to die, but the King had him put into the Tower, where he was a prisoner for thirteen years.

Then he told the King that, if he would set him free, he would go to South America and bring home great store of gold. King James set him free, for he wanted money badly; but he warned Raleigh not to go to lands that were owned by the King of Spain. He did not wish to do anything to vex the Spanish King, for he was hoping to marry his son Charles to a Spanish Princess.

But James knew as well as Raleigh that it would not be easy to keep away from land claimed by the Spaniards, for no one knew exactly where they began or ended. However, the brave leader set out on his adventure.

When Raleigh got to the mouth of a great river called the Orinoco, he brought his ships to anchor. Then he sent one of his own sons with an old friend named Captain Keymis to search for a certain gold-mine which he had heard lay some distance up the river.

Now, Raleigh had been to this place some years before; but since that time the Spaniards had built a village near the mine. As soon as Captain Keymis got there, they began to fire at his party out of the woods. Young Raleigh was shot down, and the rest of the party had to go back without having seen the mine at all.

When Raleigh heard of their failure, he could not help bitterly blaming his old friend. Captain Keymis took this so much to heart that he shut himself up in his cabin and killed himself.

Raleigh was forced to sail home, and when he got there the Spanish King sent a messenger to King James to complain of what had been done. So, to please the Spaniards, the King said that the old sentence upon Raleigh was to be carried out—that is, he was to be put to death by having his head cut off.

The people hated Spain and loved Raleigh, and they were truly sorry to see the last of Elizabeth's heroes come to such an end.

CHAPTER XXXII.—THE FIRST KING OF GREAT BRITAIN.

THERE were two great events of the reign of James I., both of which have to do with religion.

The Roman Catholics thought that James



COSTUMES OF THE TIME : THREE WOMEN OF THE MIDDLE CLASS
AND A COUNTRYWOMAN.

would take their part and show favour to them, as his mother, Mary Stuart, had been a Catholic. And when they found that he would not do so, a number of them formed a cruel plot against him.

It was proposed to blow up with gunpowder the Houses of Parliament when the King, his

two sons, and his lords were there. Then the plotters meant to make Elizabeth, the King's little daughter, Queen, and bring her up as a Roman Catholic.

The chief of the plotters was a gentleman named Robert Catesby. He told his plan to a number of his friends, among whom was a soldier named Guy Fawkes, who was ready for any daring deed, however dangerous it might be.

A cellar under the Parliament House was hired, and here the plotters stored some barrels of gunpowder, concealing them under a lot of wood and coal.

They next wished to buy horses and arms, so that, when the cruel deed was done, they might seize the little Princess. But as they had no money left, they were forced to tell their secret to some rich men, who they thought would help them.

One of them had a relative in the House of Lords, and he did not wish him to be blown up with the rest. He therefore sent him a letter telling him not to go to Parliament on the day of the King's visit.

This letter was shown to the King, and he guessed that the "hidden blow" of which it spoke was to be a gunpowder explosion. So plans were made to ensure his safety and that of his friends.

Parliament was to meet on the 5th of November. The night before the cellars under the House were searched by soldiers, and Guy Fawkes was found there, waiting to set fire to the gunpowder next morning.

He was at once made prisoner. The other plotters had met together in the Midlands, pretending that they were going to form a hunting-party. When they heard that Guy Fawkes had been caught they separated. But they were in time taken prisoners after some fighting, in which several of them were killed. The rest were put to death.

In the time of James I. there were certain persons in England who did not wish to go to the services which were held in the English churches. They were good and pious people, and wished to worship God in their own way. But at that time the law would not allow them to do so. These people were afterwards known as Independents.

They were mostly poor men working on the land, and their homes were very dear to them. Yet their religion was dearer to them than their homes, or even their lives, and a number of them made up their minds to go to Holland, where they would be allowed to worship God in their own way.

They lived for some years in that land, near a

city called Leyden. But they did not like town life, and they found it hard to earn a living among the Dutch. So they decided to cross the Atlantic and make new homes for themselves in that part of America which lay to the north of Raleigh's colony of Virginia. There they would be under the rule of their own King.

So they came back to England, and set sail late in the summer from Southampton in a small vessel called the *Mayflower*. It was November when they sighted the coast of America, and came to anchor in a bay near a headland called Cape Cod.

A party was sent off to choose a good landing-place. Winter was coming on, and the search-party suffered greatly as they coasted along in an open boat. The snow fell thickly; the spray from the stormy waves wetted them to the skin, and then froze until their clothes were like suits of iron. One of their number afterwards wrote:

“Whichever way they turned their eyes (save upward to the heavens), they could have little comfort. For summer being done, all things looked upon them with a weather-beaten face; and the whole country, full of woods and thickets, afforded a wild and savage view.

“Being thus passed the vast ocean, they had now no friends to welcome them, nor inns to

refresh their weather-beaten bodies; no houses, much less towns, to go to seek for help."

At last they found a sheltered harbour to which former travellers had given the name of Plymouth Bay. Here they landed. The granite rock on which they stepped ashore is still kept by their descendants, and is known as Forefathers' Rock. In due time all the people, about one hundred in number, were landed from the *Mayflower*.

Log-huts were set up, and in these they passed the winter. In the spring a dreadful sickness broke out among them, and many of them died. After a while only twenty of the men were left. Yet when the *Mayflower* set out once more for England, not one returned with her.

After many hardships and dangers from Red Indians, these people, and others who came to join them, founded a New England on the other side of the ocean. Here they were free to worship God as they pleased, though the King of Great Britain and Ireland was still their Sovereign, and the Old England across the sea was their well-loved "home."

CHAPTER XXXIII.—THE GREAT CIVIL WAR.

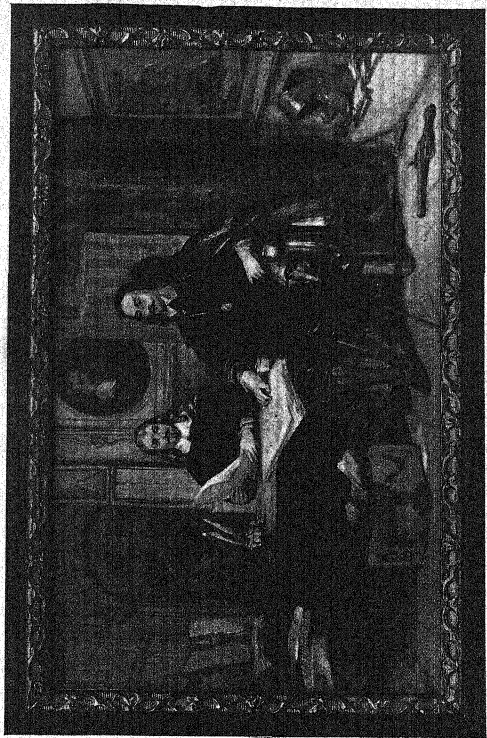
THE King who came after James I. was his son, who was known as Charles I. He was a good man in many ways, but he wished to rule without the help of Parliament; and this led to great trouble, as we shall see.

The King wished for money, and he ordered the rich men of the land to lend him some. A number of gentlemen said that Parliament only could order them to pay money, and refused to do what the King wished. Thereupon Charles sent them to prison.

This and other acts of the King roused the anger of the Parliament and people. And before long there were two great parties in the land—those who took the part of the Parliament, and those who sided with the King. The former came to be known as Roundheads, because they wore their hair short, and the latter as Cavaliers.

Not only did King Charles rouse the spirit of many of the English people against him: he also gave offence to the people of Scotland by trying to make them worship in their churches as he did himself.

They refused, and were ready to fight for what



KING CHARLES THE FIRST AND HIS SECRETARY.
(From a painting by Callenrode. Mansell, Photo.)

they thought to be right. Charles marched an army towards the Border, but he was met by a strong Scottish force, which took Newcastle and overran the country round about.

King Charles was forced to give way, and had to promise to pay the Scottish leaders a large sum of money. To get this money he asked Parliament to meet. When the members came together, they had quite made up their minds to force the King to rule the land as they thought he ought to do.

The King had a friend named the Earl of Strafford, who had often helped him in many ways. He had ruled Ireland for the King, and, though a very stern man, he had ruled it well. He kept order in the land, and made the people better off than they had ever been before. He taught the people of the North to grow flax to be made into linen, and so started the work of linen-making for which Ireland is now famous.

But in England he took the side of the King against the Parliament, and the members hated him well. They said that he was a traitor, and that he had planned to bring troops over from Ireland to fight against the King's subjects. He was tried, and found guilty.

The punishment was death, but Strafford hoped that the King would save him. In this he was

disappointed, and before long the King's friend was put to death by having his head cut off.

This was really the first step in a struggle which came to be known as the Great Civil War. After awhile King Charles went to Nottingham, and called his friends to arms. They came at his call, eager to fight for him, though some of them thought he was really in the wrong. There were some of the richest and noblest in the land round the banner of the King. On the other side were most of the merchants and trades-people, who were ready to fight and to lay down their lives for freedom. Both sides were brave and resolute, and both were fighting for what they thought was right.

The first battle was fought at Edgehill, in the county of Warwick, and the King's troops had the better. Then the war went on for about two years, the victory lying first with one side and then with the other, until there came to the front on the side of the Parliament a famous man, who brought the war in time to an end.

This was Oliver Cromwell, a country gentleman of Ely, who was also a member of Parliament. He raised a troop of horse-soldiers, and drilled them well. He took care that only really earnest and sober men were allowed to enter his regiment. They wore red coats, with a "back and breast"

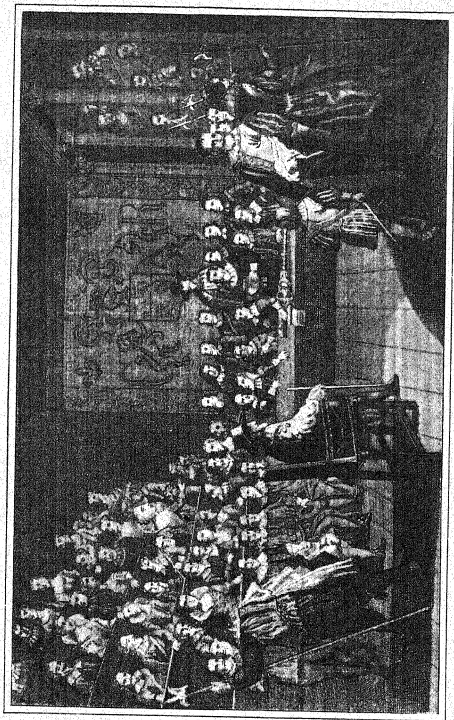
of iron over them, iron helmets, and each man had a sword and a pair of pistols.

This troop came to be known as Cromwell's Ironsides; and at the great Battle of Marston Moor, in Yorkshire, they greatly helped to win a victory for Cromwell's side. In this fight the Scots took part, for the leaders of the Roundheads had asked for their help against the King.

One year later Cromwell met the King in battle at Naseby, and the Royalists were beaten. After a few months King Charles gave himself up to the leaders of the Scottish army, which was then in camp at Newark. They handed him over to the generals of the Roundhead army, who kept him as a prisoner.

They said that so long as Charles was alive the land would have neither rest nor peace. The members of Parliament wished to make peace with the King. But the leaders of the army sent troops to the Parliament House, who refused to let those members who sided with the King pass in. After this Parliament had to do what the generals wished.

King Charles was brought before a court and tried as a "tyrant, traitor, murderer, and public enemy." He said that they had no right to try their King. The judge asked him what he had to say for his crimes against "the good people of



THE TRIAL OF CHARLES THE FIRST.

(From an old print. Showing the woman in the gallery making the objection referred to on page 180.)

England." Then a woman's voice in a gallery of the hall was heard, crying: "It is a lie; not half nor a quarter of the people of England." She meant that it was only one party of the people who charged the King with wrong, and of course she was quite right, for Charles had many friends.

The trial was really a mockery, for the judges had made up their minds at the first to put the King to death. At last they passed sentence. The King of the land was to be put to death by having his head cut off.

On the 30th of January, 1649, the King walked across the Park from St. James's Palace in London to the Palace of Whitehall. It was a cold, frosty morning. When he was dressing, the King had asked for a warm shirt; for the cold might make him shiver, and he did not wish, he said, that the people should think he was shaking from fear.

He met his death bravely like a King and a man. As he died, a deep groan broke from the crowd around the scaffold. The Civil War had come to an end, and Oliver Cromwell was now the master of England.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—OLIVER CROMWELL.

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND were now to form what was called a Commonwealth. There was to be no King, though two sons of Charles were alive. After a time Cromwell took the title of Lord Protector.

One of the first things he did was to go across to Ireland, which had for about eight years been in a state of rebellion. He thought that the only way to settle the country was to take the land from the Irish, and kill them or drive them away across the sea.

He marched his men to Drogheda and took the town by storm. Three thousand men were put to the sword. Even those who begged for mercy were killed. A number of soldiers and priests took refuge in a church. Cromwell ordered it to be set on fire.

In other parts of the land the same cruel work went on, and in nine months Cromwell's soldiers had done their work only too well. The land that had been taken was given, for the most part, to English settlers. Thousands of Irish were driven from their homes to live a wild life in the mountains of the West.

It is no wonder that Cromwell was for a long

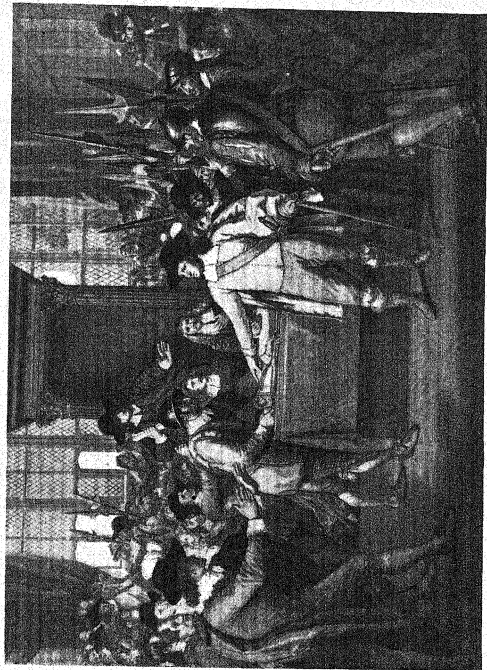
time remembered with the greatest hatred in Ireland. As soon as this work was done he came back to England, only to find that he had now to fight another foe.

The Scots had crowned the eldest son of Charles, who bore his father's name, as King. Cromwell marched an army along the east coast to Dunbar. But the clever Scottish general, Leslie, was able to place his men so that they lay between Cromwell and England.

A battle took place, beginning in the early morning, before the moon had set. Cromwell's troopers soon routed the Scottish horsemen; and, before long the main body of Leslie's army broke in flight. Cromwell marched to Edinburgh, but the young Prince Charles slipped past him at the head of a Scottish army.

Cromwell set out after him at once, and came up with him at Worcester. And on the 3rd of September, 1651, just a year after the Battle of Dunbar, there was a fierce fight in the streets of the old cathedral city; but when evening came, the army of Charles was beaten and scattered. This was Cromwell's last battle.

After many exciting adventures, Prince Charles was able to make his escape to France. It is said that he once hid in an oak-tree, and watched Oliver's troopers searching for him below.



CROMWELL EXPELLING THE LONG PARLIAMENT.

Cromwell before long had a quarrel with the Parliament, and he made up his mind to send the members about their business. He took some soldiers down to the House of Commons, and left them outside while he went quietly into the hall where the members met together.

After a while he got up and began to make a speech which did not please the members. They tried to stop him, but he shouted: "Come, come, we have had enough of this: I will put an end to your prating."

Then he called in the soldiers. "You are no Parliament!" he cried, stamping his foot in a rage. "Get you gone! Give way to honest men!" Soon the soldiers had forced the members out. Then Cromwell went up to the table, on which lay the mace which is carried before the Speaker. "Take away that bauble," he cried. Then he locked the door of the House, and now England had neither King nor Parliament.

After this Cromwell was made Protector, and he ruled the land for some time. He ruled well on the whole, and made the country respected abroad. He chose one of his generals, named Blake, to be Admiral; and though this man had at first no knowledge of sea-fighting, he soon proved to be one of the best naval leaders we have ever had.

He beat the Dutch and the Spaniards, and took from the latter the large island of Jamaica, which lies on the other side of the Atlantic. Since that time it has formed part of our Empire.

One of the most daring things he did was to enter the Spanish harbour of Santa Cruz, where a fleet of sixteen vessels lay at anchor under the guns of seven strong forts. Two of the ships were sunk, and the rest were burnt. This was Blake's last fight. A few months later he sailed for home. As his ship was passing up the Channel, and within sight of Plymouth, he died of fever.

In the next year Blake's great master, Cromwell, passed away. As he lay on his death-bed a great storm of wind arose, which tore off the roofs of houses and laid many a tree to the ground. He died on the 3rd of September, the anniversary of the day on which he had won his victories at Dunbar and Worcester.

CHAPTER XXXV.—THE RESTORATION.

WHEN Oliver Cromwell died there was great confusion, and for a time there was no real ruler in the land.

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the head of his men, and had a new Parliament chosen. When the members met, they sent to the son of Charles I., who was living in Holland, and asked him to come and take the throne.

Of course, he was only too ready to come home again from what he afterwards called his "travels." And on May 29th, 1660, he landed on Dover beach. He was received by Monk and other officers, and then travelled by road to London, where he was greeted with great joy by crowds of people.

This event is called the Restoration, and was the beginning of the reign of Charles II. The new King came to be known as the Merry Monarch, and the name gives us a very good idea of the man. He was witty and full of good humour, but weak, selfish, and pleasure-loving. There is not much that happened in his reign which Englishmen are proud to remember.

There were, however, two men living at that time whose names are now written upon the roll of fame. One was the great poet John Milton, who had been a friend of Oliver Cromwell, and was now poor, old, and blind. But in spite of his blindness he wrote his great poem, which is called *Paradise Lost* and tells the story of the Creation in the most noble language that was ever written.

The other great man of the time was John

Bunyan, a poor tinker who was sent to prison because he preached to the people. He wrote while in prison his famous book called *The Pilgrim's Progress*, which is almost as well known as the Bible.

It was in this reign that England was visited by a terrible disease called the Plague. It spread very quickly from one person to another, and those who took it died after a few hours. The Plague was worst in London, where seven thousand people are said to have died of it in one week.

The disease was partly caused by the dirty state of London. The streets were narrow, and, as a rule, deep in mud. People threw their ashes out into the street, and emptied their pails out of their windows.

When cooler weather came, the Plague began to abate. One night in September, 1666, a fire broke out in the city ; and, as the summer had been dry and a strong wind was blowing, it spread very quickly from one wood-and-plaster house to another. It was three days before it could be got under.

A gentleman who saw the great fire tells how "everybody was trying to remove their goods, and flinging them into the river or bringing them into lighters. Poor people stayed in their houses as long as till the very fire touched them. Then

they ran into boats, or clambered from one pair of stairs by the waterside to another. Among other things, the poor pigeons I saw were loth to leave their houses, but hovered about the windows and balconies till some of them burned their wings and fell down."

People could scarcely get about the burning streets. The fierce heat scorched their faces, and the hot ground burned their feet. At night the red glare of the sky could be seen forty miles away.

A great part of the city was burned down, and the old Cathedral of St. Paul, which can be seen in the picture, was also destroyed. When the city was rebuilt, the streets were made wider, and many of the houses were built with brick instead of wood. A new St. Paul's Cathedral was built, and is standing to this day.

You will learn when you grow older about the wars of the time of Charles II., and of his dealings with the French King, which* did little good to England. When Charles died, one of his courtiers said in jest that these lines ought to be written on his tombstone :

“ Here lies our sovereign lord the King,
Whose word no man relies on,
Who never said a foolish thing,
And never did a wise one.”



THE GREAT FIRE OF LONDON.

(From an old print.)

CHAPTER XXXVI.—THE REVOLUTION.

THE people did not like their new King, James II., who was a sullen man, very unlike his brother. He, however, only wore the crown for three years. He lost it because he tried to set his own wishes above the laws of the land. His desire was, in a word, to rule in his own way, and even his father's death on the scaffold had not taught him that this was a dangerous game to play.

The people were ruled by laws which were made in Parliament, and then agreed to by the King. But James drew up a paper giving certain orders which went against the law of the land; and he said that this paper was to be read to the people in all the churches on a certain Sunday.

Seven of the Bishops then wrote to the King asking him not to give this order to the clergy, as most of them felt that they would be doing wrong to obey it. The King was very angry. When the Sunday came, only a few clergymen in the land read the paper. In these cases the people rose in a body and walked out of the church.

James now sent his officers to arrest the Bishops. They were to be tried for setting the people against the King. So they were taken to the Tower of London and put on their trial.

People crowded to see them go, and blessed them as the friends of freedom.

The judges said that the Bishops were "not guilty," and there was great joy among the people. This was the beginning of a change soon to take place, which is known in history as the Revolution.

A number of gentlemen sent a message to William of Orange, a brave Prince who lived in Holland, asking him to come and take the throne. William had married James's daughter Mary, so that he was the King's son-in-law.

William at once came over and landed at Torbay in Devonshire with a small army. But he did not need to use force, for even James's own soldiers would not fight for him; and the King before long made his way to France, where King Louis treated him very kindly.

Then the crown was offered to William's wife, Mary. But she said she would not take rank above her husband, while William said he would not rank below his wife. So it was agreed that they should rule together, and their reign is always spoken of as "the time of William and Mary."

This great change took place in England without any blood being shed. But in Scotland and Ireland William had to fight for his crown.

Most of the Scots took his side, and the Parliament in Edinburgh offered the crown of Scotland to him and Mary.

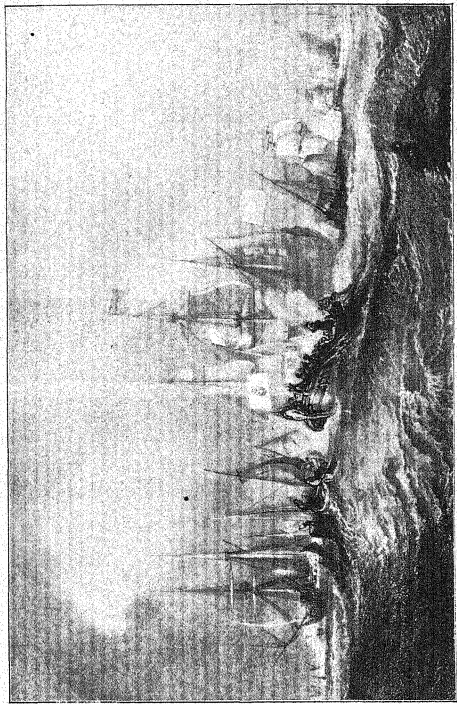
But a certain nobleman named Graham of Claverhouse, Lord Dundee, got ready to fight for King James. He went into the Highlands and got together an army, which he led to the top of a steep and narrow pass in Perthshire called Killiecrankie.

William's troops came panting up this pass on a hot July day without knowing at all who was waiting for them up above. All at once, with a fierce yell, the Highlanders rushed down on them, whirling their broadswords, clasped with both hands, round their heads.

William's men turned and fled down the pass. Many were driven into the stream at the foot and were drowned. But in the moment of victory Dundee was shot.

"How goes the day?" he asked, as he lay on the ground. "Well for King James," was the reply, "but ill for your lordship." "If it be well for him," said Dundee, "it is well for me." And soon after he died.

After this the Highlanders went home again, and their chiefs were told that by a certain day they must all promise to take William as their King. When the day came, all made the promise



WILLIAM OF ORANGE LANDING AT TORBAY.
(J. M. W. Turner.)

but one. This was MacIain of Glencoe, an old man, and chief of a small clan in a lonely valley in the West of Scotland.

He had set out to find the officer who was to take his oath, but had been delayed by a storm, and had reached the place too late. His tears and begging, however, melted the heart of the King's officer, and he took the oath. MacIain then set off home again, thinking that all was well.

But not long afterwards a band of soldiers came to the Valley of Glencoe. They were very friendly to the clan, and the Highland people treated them with great kindness. The soldiers lived in their huts, ate and drank with them, and played cards in a most friendly manner.

Then early one dark morning the soldiers entered the huts, dragged the people from their beds, and put them to death without mercy. Some managed to escape. But it was bitter weather, and many died of cold and hunger among the mountains. This cruel deed is known as the Massacre of Glencoe.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—KING JAMES II. IN IRELAND.

JAMES II. reigned in Ireland for a year after he had lost England and Scotland.

When he was trying to make changes in England, he had hoped, like his father, to get help from the Irish. He had sent over an officer, who had got together a large army of Roman Catholics; and when he lost his crown, these men were ready to fight for him.

The Protestants, except those in the North, had all their arms taken away from them. They were driven from their homes, robbed, and ill-treated. There were only a few towns left in which they were safe.

Of these towns the chief was Londonderry. This place is in the North of Ireland. It stands on the River Foyle, which below the town widens out into a broad lough.

One day the people of Londonderry saw a body of soldiers marching towards their gates. These men were coming to take over the town in the name of King James. But the people knew that the King's place was soon to be taken by William of Orange, if, indeed, the Prince had not already landed.

So when these soldiers marched up to the

town, the gates were shut in their faces, and they were forced to go away again.

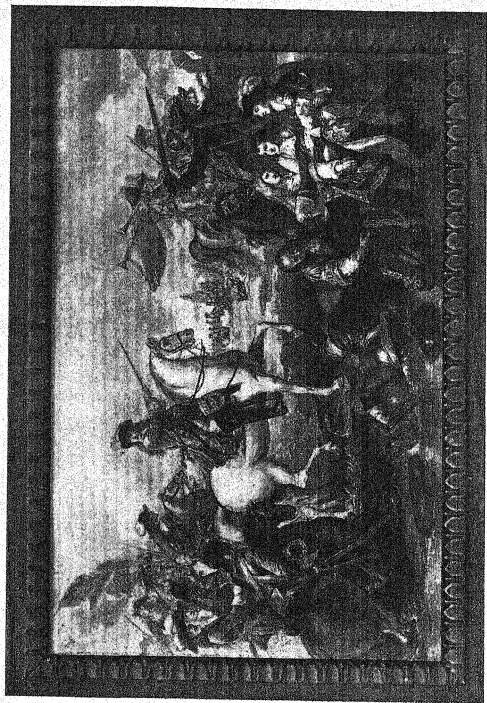
The next year James himself came to Ireland; and the first thing he did was to try to take Londonderry. He had the men at his call, and the French King, who was his friend, had provided him with money to pay them, and arms with which they could fight.

The wall of the town was very low, and not at all strong. There was not even a ditch before it. The Governor, who was a friend to King James, gave orders that his army should be allowed to enter the town. But when he marched up to the gates, he was greeted with firing from the walls and cries of "No surrender!"

The Governor made his way from the town, and two officers took in hand the work of holding it for King William. They were greatly helped by an old clergyman named Walker, who by his sermons and spirited speeches encouraged the people to hold out.

James soon went back to Dublin. The officer whom he left behind found that he could not take the city at once. So he made up his mind to starve it out. His men were placed round the town so that no food could be brought into it by land.

Across the river they threw what was known as



WILLIAM III. AT THE BATTLE OF THE BOYNE.

a "boom." This was a barrier made of fir-trees bound together, and fastened to each bank by strong cables. This would prevent any ships laden with food from reaching the town.

When the siege had lasted two months, an English fleet came, having on board a good stock of food. But for weeks the vessels lay below the boom, unable to reach the quays of the city.

The people within were by this time nearly starving. They had no meat but horse-flesh, and very little of that. Men who had once been rich were glad to get a piece of salted hide to gnaw.

At last one evening the watchers on the church-tower saw some ships sailing up the river. The captains of two trading ships which were with the fleet had offered to try and break the boom.

With all sails set, and driven by a strong wind, the two ships were steered straight at the barrier. They crashed against it; it broke, and they passed safely inside. Before long they were lying at the city quay unloading their precious stores. Two days later the Irish army gave up the siege and went away.

In the spring of the following year King William came himself to Ireland; and a battle was fought at the River Boyne near Drogheda.

When he found himself at last face to face

with the enemy, King William was delighted. "Gentlemen," he cried cheerily, "I am glad to see you; and it will be my own fault if you escape me now."

The next morning William's great General, Schomberg, led the foot-soldiers across the river which parted the two armies. The water was so deep that they waded up to the armpits. As soon as they landed on the other side, the Irish foot-soldiers ran away.

But the horsemen rode forward and drove Schomberg's foot-soldiers before them; and as the brave old general was urging them to stand, he fell dead from his horse.

By this time, however, King William had crossed the river with the cavalry. He led them boldly forward, and in a few moments the army of James was in full retreat.

A writer of the time tells how, on that day, William, "weak, sickly, wounded, was swimming the river, leading the charge, stopping the flight, grasping his sword with his left hand, and managing his bridle with a bandaged arm." Meanwhile James was watching the battle from a safe distance. So it is not surprising that William won the day, and that James had, once for all, to leave the kingdoms which had at one time owned him as their lord.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—THE TIME OF
MARLBOROUGH.

AFTER the death of Mary and William the Princess Anne, younger daughter of James II., became Queen. She was a good, kind woman, and the country did well during her reign. The people called her "Good Queen Anne." But she was by no means a clever woman like Queen Elizabeth. In fact, she was rather stupid, and for a long time she was entirely managed by a lady named Sarah Churchill, who afterwards became Duchess of Marlborough.

This lady's husband was one of the most famous men of his time. He was a soldier, and he fought in the war in Europe against the French.

At one time the French King sent an army to attack the ruler of Germany. Marlborough followed it, and came up with it near a village called Blenheim. There a great battle took place, in which the British troops won the day.

This was the greatest victory that had been won by our troops since the time when Henry V. beat the French at Agincourt. The French general was made a prisoner, and no less than forty thousand of his men were killed or taken.

In England there was great joy, and Marlborough was looked upon as a great hero. He

was given a large estate near Woodstock. There he built a very fine house, to which he gave the name of Blenheim.

It was in the reign of Queen Anne that England and Scotland were joined together to form one kingdom. Since 1603 the two countries had been under the rule of the same Sovereign. But each had its own Parliament and laws quite separate from the other. And at any time Scotland might have chosen a King of its own who was not also the King of England.

But in the year 1707 England and Scotland became one kingdom under the name of Great Britain, with one Parliament made up of both English and Scottish members, which was to meet in London.

The Union was a great blessing to both countries, but for a time there were certain of the Scots who felt rather sore about it. They thought that the gain was all on the side of the English, and that Scotland had lost her freedom.

Now, there were at that time in both England and Scotland many people who hoped to see the son of James II. on the throne of his father. They were called Jacobites, from the Latin word *Jacobus*, which stands for James. And when Queen Anne's health began to fail, they made many plots for placing James Edward Stuart on the throne.

He was a Roman Catholic, however, and by the law of the land the King of Great Britain and Ireland was to be a Protestant. If he had changed his religion, even many of those who were not Jacobites would have helped him to gain the crown. But he would not do so. And when Queen Anne died, a German Prince who ruled Hanover became King as George I.

But the Jacobites did not give up their hopes, and we shall read more of them in our next chapter.

CHAPTER XXXIX.—THE JACOBITES.

WHEN George I. became King, the Jacobites thought they would try to stir up a rising against him in Scotland. They knew that many people there were not at all well pleased about the Union.

So they raised an army of Highlanders to fight for the Stuarts ; and some Jacobite gentlemen in the North of England joined them. King George's troops marched north to Sheriffmuir, and a fight took place. It was hard to say which side had won. As the old poem puts it :

“ We ran and they ran, and they ran and we ran,
And we ran and they ran awa', man.”

When it was too late, James Edward, the son of James II., came over from France. He called himself James III. of Great Britain and Ireland. But he was not the man to put fresh heart into his friends. They were full of spirit, life, and hope, as the songs of the time show us very well :

The winds as they rise
Bear onward the cries
Of gentle and simple and churl,
As the rally-cry ran
From man unto man,
“For the King—for the Cause—for the
Earl!”

But “the King” was very grave and gloomy. He did nothing but grumble, and now and then he shed tears. After six weeks he went back to France, and the first Jacobite rising was over. It was called “the Fifteen,” because it took place in the year 1715.

The rebels were on the whole treated without cruelty. Only two of the leaders were put to death. Another, who was sentenced to die, managed to make his escape with the aid of his wife.

She went to see him in the Tower—as everyone thought, to say good-bye for ever. But she dressed him in her own clothes, and stayed

behind in his cell, while he walked out through all the guards. The men felt very sorry for the poor "lady," who seemed to be crying so bitterly with her face buried in her handkerchief.

Thirty years later the Jacobites tried once more to win the throne for the Stuarts. James Edward was by this time an elderly man; but his son, Charles Edward, a handsome young man of twenty-five, landed on the western coast of Scotland, and called his friends about him.

Soon a little army of Highlanders was gathered about "Bonnie Prince Charlie." He marched to Edinburgh, where most of the people received him gladly, and he gave a great ball in Holyrood Palace.

King George's army was now not far from the city, and at Prestonpans Prince Charles took them by surprise. With a fierce yell the Highlanders rushed upon the soldiers, and in a few minutes swept all before them.

Then Prince Charles led his army across the Border and marched southward. He himself went on foot, wearing the Highland kilt and a blue bonnet, into which was fastened a white cockade.

He hoped that the English Jacobites would flock to his banner, but there were few who did so. Then, when the Jacobite army reached



PORTRAIT OF A SCOTTISH GENTLEMAN.

(From the painting by Raeburn, the property of Sir T. Sinclair, Bart.)

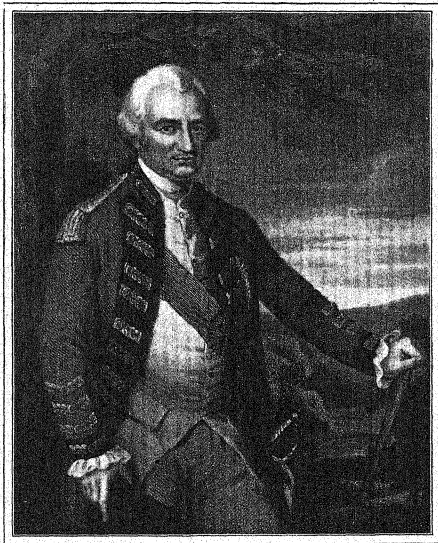
The guns on the English ships which had brought Wolfe's men up the river could do little harm to the town because it was perched so high above them. For some time the troopships lay in the river, and Wolfe began to think that he would never be able to take the city.

He saw that the only way by which he could get his men near to Quebec would be to take them up the steep cliff to the west of it. This would be a very hard thing to do, but he made up his mind to try.

On a dark night he and a picked number of men got into boats, and with muffled oars slipped silently down the river. As they went past one point a French sentry called out to ask who they were. An officer in Wolfe's party, who could speak French very well, replied to him, and made out that the boats were full of stores for the army of Montcalm. They were then allowed to pass.

Before long they came to a point at the foot of the cliffs from which a narrow and rocky zigzag path led up to the top. Here they landed, and began to climb up the steep cliff as best they could.

When they got to the top, the French sentinels were so much surprised that, after firing their guns, they turned and fled; and when day broke Wolfe had an army of four thousand men on what were known as the Heights of Abraham.



ROBERT, LORD CLIVE.

(From the Lodge Collection.)

Montcalm then came up with the French army, and a battle began. Both sides fought well and bravely, knowing that not only Quebec, but the whole of Canada, was the prize which would fall to the victor. Before evening fell the French had been beaten and were in headlong flight.

Before the day was won Wolfe was struck by a bullet, and had to be carried to the rear. As he lay dying, an officer beside him cried, "See, they run!" "Who run?" asked Wolfe eagerly, raising himself with an effort on his elbow. "The enemy," was the reply. "Now, God be praised!" said Wolfe, "I shall die happy." And he fell back dead.

Montcalm also was mortally wounded, and was told that he had but a short time to live. "So much the better," said the brave Frenchman; "then I shall not see the British in Quebec." In a few days the city was ours, and after some further fighting the whole of Canada came into our hands.

While this was going on, English and French soldiers were also fighting in India. For many years the French had been trading with the people of that great land, and had won a large part of it for themselves. At one time it seemed that India would in time belong to France.

Then there arose on the side of the British a

great soldier called Robert Clive. He was at first only a clerk to the English merchants who traded in India. But after a while he gave up this work, and proved himself to be such a good soldier that he was given command of an army. He fought the French and the Indian Princes who helped them ; and under his leadership the British went on winning, not only battles, but land and power in India.

In the year after Wolfe took Quebec, Clive fought and won the great Battle of Plassey. His enemy was not the French, but an Indian Prince who had been very cruel to the British merchants and their people in Calcutta.

He locked up one hundred and forty-five of them in a dungeon, afterwards known as the "Black Hole of Calcutta." It was only a small room with two windows placed high above the floor and barred with iron.

It was summer, and, as you know, the heat in India is very great. The prisoners knew they must soon die for want of air. They tried to get the guards to unlock the door. Their answer was that nothing could be done without the Prince's orders, that he was asleep, and would be very angry if anyone woke him.

Then the poor prisoners begged for water. But when some was brought in skins, as is the custom

in the East, it was found that they were too large to be passed between the bars of the windows. .

Then the prisoners went mad with despair, and what happened is too dreadful to be told. When morning came and the door of the cell was opened, only twenty-three of them were found to be alive.

Not long after this happened Clive marched against the Prince, fought his great army at Plassey, and beat him completely. After this battle the British went on winning one part of India after another ; and now almost the whole of that great peninsula is more or less under our rule.

CHAPTER XLI.—NAPOLEON ; NELSON ; WELLINGTON.

IN the long reign of George III. France had a ruler who was known as the Emperor Napoleon. He was one of the greatest soldiers that the world has ever seen, and he wished to make himself master of the whole of Europe.* He fought many battles in which many lives were lost, and he won many great victories. At one time he was indeed master of a great part of Europe.

But there was one country which he was never able to conquer. This was our own country. And in time he was not only beaten by our troops and fleets, but he lost his throne, and

was sent as a prisoner to a small British island far out in the middle of the Atlantic.

The fight of the British with Napoleon was long and costly, both in lives and money. Many great soldiers and sailors took part in it, and other nations of Europe helped us to conquer the great French Emperor. But there were two men on our side who stood out among the rest in the long struggle. One was our great admiral, Lord Nelson; the other was our great general, the Duke of Wellington.

Nelson's first great battle was that fought off Cape St. Vincent in Portugal, where he served under Admiral Jervis. The Admiral had given the order that the British ships were to follow each other in a line. Nelson in a small ship called the *Captain* was almost last.

All at once he saw that the Spanish Admiral was changing the course of his ships and must be checked. Though he had really no right to do so, he broke out of the line and turned the attack of the enemy upon himself.

Before help came the *Captain* had suffered greatly. But Nelson ran her alongside a Spaniard, boarded her, and made her strike her flag. Then, leading his men across her deck, he captured another great Spanish ship which had come up on her other side.

After the victory was over, one of the British officers, who was jealous of Nelson, pointed out to the Admiral that he had not obeyed orders. "He did not," said Jervis, "and if ever you disobey orders in such a way I will forgive you also."

In the next year Nelson fought the French at the great Battle of the Nile. This famous fight took place at night-time, and during the battle Nelson was slightly wounded. He was taken below, and the surgeon, who was busy with some of the men, came up at once to attend to him. "No, no," said the Admiral; "I will take my turn with my brave fellows." After this battle the victor was made Baron Nelson of the Nile.

After a while the French Emperor made peace with England, but only because he wished for time to get ready to invade our country. Then, when he thought that all was ready, war broke out again, and he got the King of Spain, who had a great navy, to join him against us. Nelson had to fight these two fleets in his last and greatest battle.

It took place off Cape Trafalgar, on the south coast of Spain, about one hundred years ago. Nelson had twenty-seven ships, and his foes had thirty-three. At eleven in the morning Nelson ran up his famous signal: "England expects that every man will do his duty."



SIR HYDE PARKER, A SEA-CAPTAIN OF NELSON'S DAY.

(From the painting by George Romney.)

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Soon the great fight was raging, and Nelson, walking on the deck of his ship, the *Victory*, was shot in the back. Before night came he lay dead in his cabin; but before he passed away he knew that the great battle had been won, and the last words he spoke were: "Thank God, I have done my duty."

One of the great soldiers who fought against Napoleon was the Duke of Wellington. He fought him in Spain, where the French Emperor had placed his own brother on the throne against the wish of the people. There was much stern fighting during this war, and the loss of life on both sides was very great. But at last the French were driven out of Spain.

Wellington followed them into France; and when he was on the march to Paris he received the news that Napoleon was no longer Emperor of the French. The people had grown tired of his wars. He was sent away to a little island near to Italy, and of this tiny piece of land he was allowed to call himself "Emperor." But he was really a prisoner.

After ten months he was able to get away, and landed in France. His old soldiers and officers flocked to join him; the very troops sent to capture him went over to his side. Once more he was made Emperor of the French. In a few

weeks he marched to Belgium to fight the British under Wellington and the Prussians under Blucher.

He beat the Prussians first, and then moved on to meet Wellington, who made his stand at Waterloo. The battle was fought on a Sunday, the 18th of June, 1815. It began a little before noon, and raged till eight o'clock in the evening.

On the top of a ridge of ground stood nine squares of British foot-soldiers with their bayonets pointing outwards. Twelve times the brave French horsemen charged against these squares without being able to break them.

But though the British stood fast, the red squares were getting smaller and smaller, and in a desperate charge against the enemy our horse-soldiers had lost heavily. Wellington was hoping that Blucher would come to his aid, and as evening drew on the Prussians were seen advancing.

Then Napoleon made one last great effort. He sent forward his best and bravest soldiers—the Old Guard, who had won a name for bravery all over Europe.

“Long live the Emperor!” they cried as they reached the crest of the ridge. But a deadly fire from the British emptied many a saddle. Then the word was given to charge, and the Old Guard was swept back down the hill in confusion.

Wellington gave the order for his whole line to

advance. In a few minutes the French army was in hopeless flight. The great battle was won. Napoleon escaped, but only to give himself up to the captain of a British man-of-war.

He was sent to Saint Helena as a prisoner, and never again did he trouble Europe. Six years after his last great battle he died.

While the wars with Napoleon were going on, the last step was taken which made the British Isles into one nation. The Irish Parliament which sat in Dublin came to an end; and henceforth the Irish members were to come up to the Parliament in London, where for nearly a hundred years English and Scottish members had met together. There was now one Parliament for the whole of the British Isles.

CHAPTER XLII.—QUEEN VICTORIA'S LONG REIGN.

TWENTY-TWO years after the great Battle of Waterloo the Princess Victoria became Queen of Great Britain and Ireland. She reigned for sixty-four years, longer than any other King or Queen before her; and during her reign there were many great changes in the land.

On the whole, her reign was a time of peace. We had a war with Russia, which is known as



A DAME SCHOOL OF THE EARLY YEARS OF QUEEN VICTORIA'S REIGN.—W. MULREADY, R.A.

(From the original painting in the Tate Gallery.)

the Crimean War, and in this struggle we fought side by side with the French. But the fighting did not last for a very long time.

Not long afterwards there was fighting in India, where some of the native soldiers rose against our officers. This event was known as the Indian Mutiny; and at one time during the fighting it seemed as if we were going to lose our hold on India. Many brave deeds were done by British soldiers and officers, and at last the rising was put down.

Our troops also fought in Egypt during the reign of Queen Victoria. There they had to meet the Arabs and the fierce dervishes of the desert, who fought like wild beasts. In the latter part of the Queen's reign these men shut up the brave General Gordon in Khartoum, and before our troops could reach him he was killed. He was one of the best and bravest men who have ever lived.

Some years later there was a great battle not far from Khartoum, in which Sir Herbert Kitchener fought the Arabs and beat them. Then he marched his troops into the city where Gordon had met with his death.

Kitchener also fought along with Lord Roberts in a war with the Boers of South Africa, which took place at the end of the Queen's long reign.

This war was going on when the Queen died, but not long after her death it was brought to an end.

We remember the reign of Queen Victoria chiefly because in her time so many changes for good took place. There were very few schools in the land when she came to the throne. But at the end of her reign a large number had been built, and there were few people in the land who could not at least read and write. This was in many ways a great change for the better.

The first steamship had been launched before Queen Victoria began to reign, and as time went on larger and better ones were built. After a while steam began to be used for warships. These were in Nelson's day, and for a long time afterwards, built of wood. But when better and more powerful guns were made, it was found that the "wooden walls" were not of much use against them. Then iron-clads, driven by steam, began to be used. And as time has gone by these have been altered and improved to a great extent.

The first railway was working a few years before Queen Victoria's time. But the laying of the railroads all over the country took place in the first part of her reign.

Besides railway trains and steamships, we now have other quick means of getting about. We have bicycles and electric trams and motors of

many kinds. And in some places trains are driven by electric power instead of by steam.

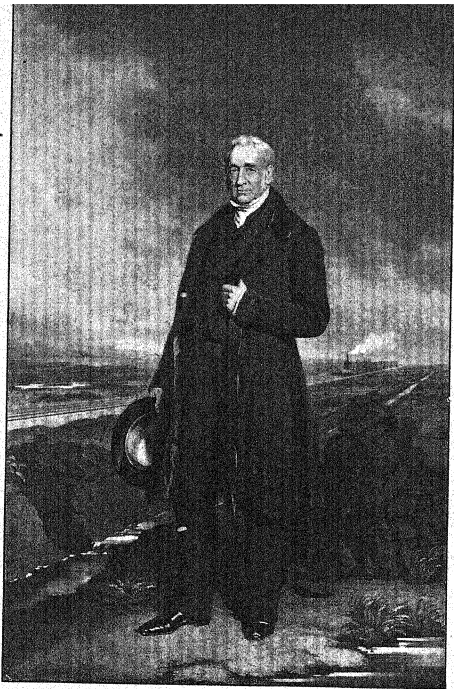
When the Queen came to the throne there were not nearly so many letters written and posted. The charge for postage was very heavy and depended upon the distance the letter had come. It was paid by the person who received the letter.

One day, it is said, a gentleman was passing a cottage in the Lake District, just as the postman came up to the door with a letter.

A poor woman came out, looked at the letter, and then gave it back to the postman, saying that she could not afford to pay a shilling for it. The gentleman was sorry to see that she could not get her letter, and kindly said he would pay the shilling, though the woman did not wish him to do so.

The postman went away, and the woman then told the gentleman that she was sorry he had wasted his money. The "letter," she said, was nothing but a blank sheet of paper. Her brother had promised to send her this from time to time, just to show that he was alive and well. And she always saved the postage by refusing to take it in.

This story came to the ears of a young man named Rowland Hill, and he began to wonder whether it was not possible to make postage



GEORGE STEPHENSON—JOHN LUCAS.
(By permission of Messrs. H. Graves and Co., Ltd.)

cheaper. He said that if only a penny were charged for each letter, so many people would write letters that the carrying of them would bring in more profit than the carrying of a smaller number at a shilling each.

At first many people laughed at the idea of a "penny post." But it was started, and proved a splendid success. We can now send a letter for a penny to many distant parts of the world, as well as to any part of our own country.

These are only a few of the many great changes which took place during the time that Queen Victoria sat on the throne. Her time has been spoken of as the "wonderful reign," because of the many wonderful changes that took place in it.

The Queen herself was much beloved by her people, for in all their troubles she was always ready to help them and to bring them comfort. She had many sorrows herself. Her husband, who was known as the Prince Consort, died after only twenty-one years of married life. And for more than forty years the great Queen was a widow.

She had nine children; and when, to the great grief of her people, her long life came to an end in 1901, her eldest son became King as Edward VII.